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OFF TO
A FLYING START**

IN THE TABLOID

**THE WOMAN
WHO HAD A SOUL
TRANSPLANT**

INSIDE THE TABLOID

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BILL GATES'S
CAMBRIDGE HOT SHOT**

**Short breaks in
Amsterdam or Antwerp**

**WIT BRITISH AIRWAYS
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Blair gets serious on climate summit

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent
New York

In the biggest public arena of all, Tony Blair yesterday condemned the United States and other industrialised nations for foot-dragging in the international campaign to tackle man-made climate change.

After the back-slapping and warmth with President Bill Clinton at the Denver G7 Summit over the weekend he repeated his pointed criticism of the US at a meeting with Vice-President Al Gore in New York yesterday.

Britain is also trying, at the United Nations Earth Summit to forge a new environment and development consensus between rich and poor countries, by urging the wealthy nations to reverse the decline in their foreign aid.

Mr Blair, accompanied to UN headquarters by no less than three of his Cabinet, condemned the US, plus Japan, Canada and Australia for failing to deliver on commitments to stabilise rising emissions of climate changing greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide which comes from the burning of coal, oil and gas.

This pledge, which covers the period 1990 to 2000, was made at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 when all the developed nations signed a treaty to stabilise their annual CO₂ emis-

sions. But Britain, Germany and Russia are the only major economies keeping that promise - mainly due to disastrous economic decline in the case of Russia.

The European Union as a whole is also on target to meet its stabilisation commitment, thanks to Britain and Germany cutting emissions.

"Some other countries cannot say the same, including some of the great industrialised nations," Mr Blair told prime ministers and presidents from several dozen nations attending the Earth Summit, a week-long special session of the UN General Assembly.

"To them I say this: our targets will not be taken seriously by the poorer countries until the richer countries are meeting them. The biggest responsibility falls on those countries with the biggest emissions."

The US, which Mr Blair did not mention by name, has the biggest emissions of all.

Developed countries have promised to cut their emissions after 2000 - by how much will be settled at a climate treaty conference in Kyoto, Japan, in December.

The EU is advocating a 15 to 20 per cent cut in annual emissions between 2000 and 2010, which would mean serious cuts in fossil fuel use and lifestyle changes. The US has not yet offered any figure, while

Australia says it cannot begin to contemplate any cuts in its fast-rising emissions.

"We in Europe have put our cards on the table. It is time for the special pleading to stop and for others to follow suit. If we fail in Kyoto, we fail our children because the consequences will be felt in their lifetime," said Mr Blair.

The Prime Minister also warned of rising sea levels and damaging climate and temperature shifts. It was a message repeated by several other EU prime ministers and presidents in New York.

In his speech to the General Assembly, Mr Blair said Britain would reverse the decline in UK foreign aid.

Meanwhile, in behind-the-scenes negotiations at the summit, Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development, was urging colleagues from other EU nations to make a joint commitment to raise overseas towards the UN's long-standing, but increasingly distant, target.

This target is for rich countries to give 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to the developing world. At the time of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 the percentage being given was just under half this, at 0.34 per cent.

But although all the wealthy nations, except the US, pledged at Rio to move towards the tar-



Fields of plenty: Vincent van Gogh's water colour *Harvest in Provence* (1888), which is estimated to fetch £8m at auction at Sotheby's in London on Thursday, represents a century on an idealised image of abundant earth and clement climate to the industrialised nations, who were chastised yesterday at the UN Earth Summit for failing to cut climate altering emissions while expecting poorer countries to cut back on deforestation

get, they have actually moved further away since then. Foreign aid has fallen to just 0.27 per cent of developed world GNP. Britain's has fallen similarly over this period and now stands at the average - 0.27 per cent of UK GNP.

This fall has soured preparations for this week's follow-up summit. Poor nations are asking how they can afford to tackle global environmental problems like tropical forest destruction and global warming when the rich world gives less and less help while consuming ever more natural resources

and producing more and more greenhouse gas pollution.

All this week there will be long and difficult negotiations between rich and poor nations over what the former should promise concerning the 0.7 per cent target. Britain's position is that the EU must take a lead in promising to reverse the aid decline.

But Britain itself has made it clear that there can be no swift change in direction, because it is committed to sticking to the expenditure plans of the previous Tory government for the next two years.

Leading article, page 19

The conference's cost to the earth

Nicholas Schoon

Tony Blair thinks future Earth summits might best be done through televisual conferencing and electronic link-ups. Staying at home would save on climate-changing emissions from aircraft, he was due to say in his speech, although that bit was cut out to shorten it.

He had a point. The UK's ministerial presence at the Earth Summit Plus Five event

spewed out over 100 times more global-warming carbon dioxide gas in a few days than the average Briton is responsible for in an entire year.

The great bulk of this climate changing cloud came from Concorde, chartered cheap rate from British Airways to take Mr Blair and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook to the G7 summit in Denver then on to the New York event yesterday. That necessitated 14 hours' flying by the

world's ultimate gas guzzler, clocking up nearly 1,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide. Three other ministers, John Prescott, Clare Short and Michael Meacher, are flying to New York and back sub-sonically by jumbo jet, with 40 members of the UK's official delegation, including the former environment secretary John Gummer. Altogether this delegation will be responsible for more than 30 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

How US helped Israel strike at innocents

Robert Fisk
Washington

An investigation by *The Independent* has revealed that most of the American bombs and air-to-ground missiles fired by Israel in Lebanon last year were sold to the United States armed forces - not to Israel.

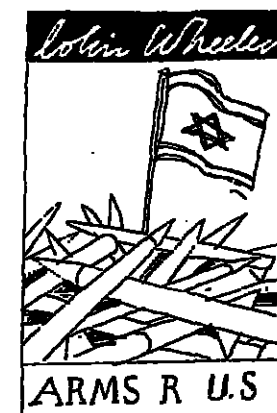
Israel's "Operation Grapes of Wrath" - the bombardment of southern Lebanon that killed almost 200 civilians and 14 guerrillas from the pro-Iranian Hizbullah - used at least 1,700 bombs and missiles that were "transferred" from US military stocks with no prohibition on their use against civilians.

In private, senior American officials have expressed grave concern about Israeli misuse of US weapons, including Marine Corps air-to-ground missiles that have killed dozens of Lebanese civilians over the past two years. Enquiries by *The Independent* have revealed that the

hellfire missile fired by an Israeli helicopter pilot at an ambulance in southern Lebanon on 13 April, 1996 - which killed four children and two women - was originally sold to the US Marine Corps by Martin Marietta of Florida, and only later transferred to Israel.

But so routine has the system of weapons transfers from US inventories become, that massive shipments of ordnance to Israel are now undertaken with no publicity or debate. Just over a week ago, for example, the United States received an Israeli request for 98,000 shells for 155 mm guns - more than three times the 26,000 rounds fired into Lebanon during the entire three-week "Grapes of Wrath" operation - at a cost of \$30m.

No explanation was given by Israel as to why such an enormous quantity of ammunition should be needed six years after the US government launched its Middle East "peace



process" in Madrid. Senatorial and congressional committees will routinely approve the transfer next month, the costs defrayed from Washington's \$1.8bn (£1.1bn) military assistance programme to Israel.

US officers have complained to *The Independent* that Israel now has carte blanche to plunder the US inventory, knowing that its sympathisers on Capitol Hill will raise no questions about the use that will be made of America's military technology against Arab countries.

The officers, who said that almost all the bombs and missiles fired during "Grapes of Wrath" were transferred from US forces' stocks of thousands of tanks and artillery pieces stripped from US Nato armouries in Europe over the past 30 years for shipment to Israel despite angry protests from the Defense Department.

"The State Department gives the orders and the acceptance of every Israeli request and desire - whatever it wants - is acceded to," a senior retired US officer intimately involved in the sale and transfer of weapons to Israel, said. "Questions aren't asked any more. It is right by."

The terms of the US Arms Export Control Act state that "defense articles ... shall be sold or leased by the United States Government ... to friendly countries solely for internal security [or] for legitimate self-defense ... but the bulk of prohibitions apply only to the further transfer of US weapons technology. Israel says that its battles in Lebanon constitute self-defense operations -

"Grapes of Wrath" was commenced after Hizbullah guerrillas fired rockets into Israel in revenge for the booby-trap killing of a Lebanese teenager - but according to defence sources, the US government has not made a single complaint about the use of Israeli weaponry in Lebanon last year.

American-made 155 mm guns fired the shells that slaughtered 109 Lebanese refugees - 53 of them children - at the UN camp at Qana on 18 April last year, while a US Marine Corps missile was believed to be responsible for the death of nine civilians from one family when

the rocket was fired by the Israelis' at a block of flats in Nabatieh on the same day. The youngest victim was two days old.

Despite four weeks of enquiries to the State Department and the Department of Defense seeking clarification about the terms of sale of the American missiles - including 30 telephone calls giving the code numbers of the Hellfire missile which killed the ambulance victims on 13 April - neither department had felt able to respond to *The Independent's* questions last night.

The Defense Department claimed that the State Department must answer: the State Department insisted that the Department of Defense must reply. "Some questions come to us with a kind of jinx attached," a DoD spokesman told *The Independent* last week. "Yours seems to have a jinx."

Essay, page 20

Labour MPs to spend more time with the people

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Labour's army of 330 backbenchers is to be put to work out in the country as the eyes and ears of the Government. In a move designed to prevent dissent born of boredom, the Government is planning a "revolution" in the way its MPs work.

Members' traditional tasks of sitting on Commons committees, voting in the House and

dealing with constituency casework will no longer play such a major part in their lives. Now they will have an extra role as "ambassadors" campaigning for new votes, working to hold on to the support Labour won at the election, and warning ministers of potential problems.

There are three prongs to the initiative. New committees of Labour members will travel the country gathering information for ministers on how government initiatives are working,

individuals will go out to explain party policy to the public, and all MPs will be given more time to spend in their own constituencies. With a majority of 180, the party whips can afford to spare them.

"This is potentially a revolutionary relationship," a spokesman said. "We are determined to make sure we don't repeat the mistakes of Tories. We are looking at new ways of working with MPs to make sure that the Government truly represents and

keeps in touch with the people on whose behalf it governs."

The new committees will shadow each Whitehall department and will provide jobs for dozens of MPs. Unlike the old backbench committees which existed under the Conservatives, they will spend much of their time outside Parliament talking to experts and the public. They will then return to tell ministers what they have found.

The committees will also have a role in campaigning for

Labour's 2002 election effort, according to Clive Soley, the chair of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

"If we are successful what will happen is that people throughout the country will feel Labour listens. If they feel that, obviously we might benefit," he said.

The role of individual "ambassadors" is less clearly defined, though they will spend time visiting constituencies to explain party policy. They might

visit community groups or local Labour parties to get the message across. Already, some new MPs have been sent out to explain Tony Blair's "Labour into Power" modernisation project.

Labour-held constituencies can also find their MPs planning to spend more time with them. Over the next six weeks, the party's backbenchers will each spend a week in their own areas. While they are there, they may find time to spread the Labour message among the voters.

INSIDE
Britain bows to Peking
Britain backed down after arguments with Peking about 500 troops who will arrive in Hong Kong on Monday, three hours before the Union Jack is lowered. Page 14

Student murdered
Police warned students in Northampton not to go out alone after the body of a music student was found strangled in bushes in a park in the town. Page 3

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significant shorts

Law Society candidates 'tried to spy on opponents'

The Law Society was forced into a damage limitation exercise yesterday after the leaking of minutes showing that the campaign team for "establishment" candidates in the next month's presidential election had discussed hiring inquiry agents to spy on their opponents and the use of negative campaigning.

The document, written in February following a meeting of the campaign team to elect current vice-president Phillip Sycamore, was leaked to his opponent Martin Mears, who served as president in 1985-6 and hopes to make an unprecedented comeback this year. The note revealed that the Sycamore campaign team chairman, Simon Baker, had suggested that inquiry agents be engaged to gather information on Mr Mears and his then running mates, David Keating and Robert Sayer, who has since transferred to the Sycamore slate.

Patricia Wynn Davies

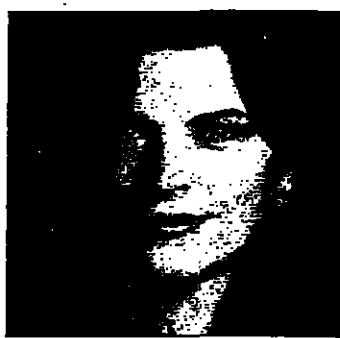
Heathrow Express for £10 each way

London's latest rail link, the Heathrow Express, to open in summer 1998, will zip passengers from London's Paddington station to the airport in just 15 minutes, with tickets costing £10 each way.

The service, which is expected to cost £440m, is due to start with departures every quarter of an hour to the airport. Users will be entitled to "airline"-style perks, including check-in desks at Paddington, and the service will operate in three classes. In its first full year, the express is expected to carry 6.5 million passengers, rising to more than 10 million by 2000.

Randeep Ramesh

ITV outbids rivals for top US sit-com



ITV has bought the rights to the new US comedy series from the writers of the Channel 4 hit, *Friends*. The new series, *Veronica's Closet*, features former *Cheers* star Kirstie Alley (pictured) as a romance and marriage expert at the top of a self-help empire trying to hide the fact that her husband is a hopeless philanderer. ITV outbid the BBC, Channel 4 and the BBC for the 13-part series at the current round of buyer's screenings in Los Angeles. The sit-com will go on air in spring next year.

Paul McCann

Setback for nurses in Saudi trial

Two British nurses accused of murdering a colleague in Saudi Arabia have been told by a Saudi court to seek "reconciliation" with the dead woman's family, lawyers said last night.

The move came at a court hearing in Saudi Arabia at which their trial was again adjourned - this time for two weeks, until 7 July.

The outcome of the hearing amounted to a setback for lawyers representing the two nurses, Lucille McLauchlan and Deborah Parry, who had challenged whether the brother of the dead nurse had the right to insist on the death penalty.

Man grew drug in daughter's room

A 27-year-old man who grew a cannabis crop in his six-year-old daughter's bedroom was jailed for three months yesterday.

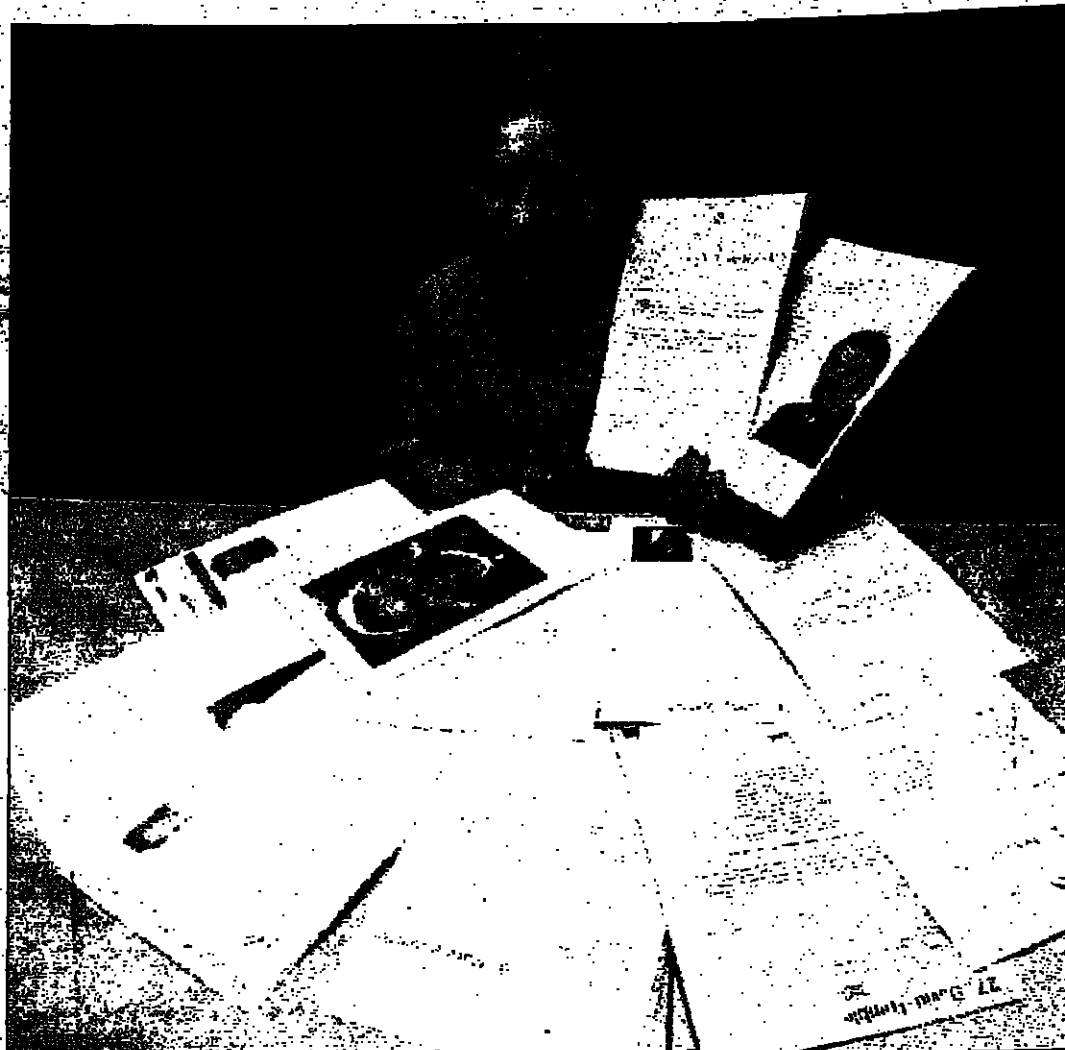
Mark Lymburn grew 26 plants in his daughter's wardrobe and behind the curtains of her room at their home in Torquay, Devon. Exeter Crown Court was told. Peter Telford for the prosecution said the plants, found during a police raid in January, would have been worth £950. Mr Lymburn pleaded guilty to cultivating cannabis, and possessing cannabis resin and magic mushrooms.

Family of four found dead at home

A family of four have been found dead at their home, Scotland Yard said yesterday. An ambulance crew called to the house in Ashness Gardens, Greenford, west London on Sunday night are receiving counselling.

The bodies of a man and woman, and a boy and girl aged under 10, are believed to have suffered knife wounds. The family has not been formally identified. Detectives think the man killed his family and then himself. Scotland Yard said the deaths are being treated as murder. Post mortems will take place today.

people



The schoolgirl who wrote to Tony Blair saying how much the people of Northern Ireland needed peace said yesterday she had not dreamed the letter would have such an effect on the Prime Minister. Mr Blair told US television viewers at the weekend how the letter from 12-year-old Margaret Giney (above), of Shankill Road in Belfast, had strengthened his resolve to find a solution.

Princess tries to defuse row over trip to IRA film

Diana, Princess of Wales, was in New York last night reflecting on how a seemingly innocent visit to the cinema with her children ended in an unseemly political row.

Earlier, the Princess apologised for "any distress which may have been caused" by her visit on Sunday with Princes William and Harry to see *The Devil's Own*, accused by some of glorifying the IRA.

She was also criticised for taking 12-year-old Harry into a 15-certificate film, after persuading cinema staff at the Kensington Odeon, west London, to allow him in. Prince William was 15 on Saturday, the day before the visit.

The film has been condemned as pro-IRA even by its stars, Brad Pitt and Harrison Ford. Pitt reportedly described it as "the most irresponsible bit of film-making - if you can even call it that - that I've ever seen."

Moreover, the cinema trip came just six days after the murder by the IRA of two RUC officers in Co Armagh. The film itself has opened to mixed reviews. Alexander Walker, of the London Evening Standard, claimed

it lacked any insight into the tragedy of Northern Ireland, but instead fostered "sympathy for romanticised terrorism ... by allowing Brad Pitt to get as many sexy kicks as he can out of ending people's lives".

While the Princess was on her way to a private viewing in Manhattan of 75 of her dresses, which are to be auctioned for charity, she issued her statement, in which said she had been "unaware" of the film's content.

The Ulster Unionist Party led the criticism of the Princess. East Londonderry MP William Ross said: "There have been a number of films in recent years about the IRA which give a twisted view about what is happening in Her Majesty's realm, and I think she was unwise."

Ron Hanlon, marketing director for Odeon cinemas, said there would be an internal investigation into the presence of a 12-year-old at the film, after which he expected talks to take place with the local licensing authority, Kensington and Chelsea council.

A spokeswoman for the Princess declined to say whether she had been in contact with Prince Charles over the row.

Michael Streeter

Players dart to the High Court for a fair share

Some of the biggest beer bellies and sweat-soaked T-shirts in sport lined up to demand official recognition yesterday. The world's top darts players are suing the British Darts Organisation (BDO), alleging it has a monopoly on organising events and competitions.

For those who await the unofficial world championships at the Circus Tavern, East London, which has seduced many of the best players from the BDO's Embassy-sponsored world title, the battle between the game's biggest names and the British Darts Council is a fight for the heart of the sport. In 1993, as support for darts dwindled, top players broke away and set up their own sporting body, the World Darts Council.

Since then, Eric Bristow, John Lowe, "Jockey" Wilson (pictured) and Cliff Lazarenko have been suspended by the BDO from participating or attending any of its events. At the High Court, London, yesterday, Andrew Hochhauser QC, representing the players, told Mr Justice Potts professional darts



players' livelihoods depended on being able to take part in competitions for prize money. "These competitions are said to be open to all, but they alone have been denied access since 1993. We claim the responsibility for the exclusion should be placed at the door of the BDO." The darts players want the judge to rule that the BDO measures were unlawful and the boycott should be ended. They are also claiming compensation for losses of earnings since the introduction of the boycott. The case continues today.

Mother attacks 'safe' drug-taking

The mother of a 13-year-old boy thought to have died after taking ecstasy yesterday launched an attack on drugs.

Phyllis Woodcock, whose son Andrew died on Thursday, has said: "I am fed up hearing middle-class drug workers saying there is a safe way to take drugs - tell that to my Andrew."

Mrs Woodcock, of New Stevenston, Lanarkshire, addressed a news conference in Glasgow to coincide with the launch of Scotland's National Drugs Awareness Week.

A survey published to coincide with the campaign says 32 per cent of Scottish adults have tried illegal drugs, and 15 per cent have done so within the past six months. The most common use by far was cannabis, with 30 per cent of respondents saying they had tried it.

Andrew's death, in the run-up to the week-long campaign, has prompted fresh argument about the wisdom of promoting "harm reduction techniques", seen by supporters as more realistic than a "don't take drugs" approach.

briefing

NHS Opticians emerge as biggest cheats in fraud inquiry

Fraud in the NHS is on the increase, and opticians are emerging as the biggest cheats, according to a survey by the Healthcare Financial Management Association.

It identified 71 cases of actual or suspected fraud by health professionals, worth £3.7m, which was said to be the tip of the iceberg. Over the past three years "several tens of millions" of pounds are thought to have been swindled from the taxpayer.

The association obtained replies from 82 of the 120 health authorities in England, Wales and Scotland. These identified 96 cases, 71 of which provided a loss figure. The average loss for each fraud was £52,183.

The cases included an optician who made several claims for eye tests and glasses for an elderly patient who had died and another who added tinted lenses to a prescription for plain glasses after it had been signed by the patient.

Jeremy Laurance

DIET

Drinkers eat bigger meals

Dieters should drop the gin and tonic before dinner, rather than the mints with the coffee afterwards, if they are serious about losing weight.

Scientists have confirmed what aperitif lovers have always known - that a pre-prandial drink stimulates the appetite. Dutch researchers who gave a group of 40 men and women a range of different drinks 30 minutes before a meal found that those who had alcohol ate more quickly and consumed more calories.

Those who had fruit juice, water or a milkshake ate more slowly and consumed less. The content of the non-alcoholic drink made no difference - their calorie intake was the same as if they had drunk nothing.

A second study presented at the European Congress on Obesity in Dublin underlines the common excuse offered by the sedentary for not exercising - that it will stimulate the appetite.

Research at the University of Leeds on a group of women trying to lose weight found they did not eat more after 50 minutes of intense exercise - but the food tasted better.

Jeremy Laurance



HEALTH

Male Pill trials prove positive

A form of male Pill could be available in five years if the success of early trials is continued, researchers in Edinburgh said yesterday. Tests of 30 men in Edinburgh, using various doses, have shown that it appears to work, and appears to be safe.

The trials involve men receiving a testosterone implant, then taking a daily pill of the hormone desogestrel, a component of the female Pill. Testosterone can suppress sperm production in very high doses, but the use of the other hormone means smaller doses can be used.

The results of the Scottish trials will be presented tomorrow at the annual meeting in Edinburgh of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology.

The work was carried out at Edinburgh University's Centre for Reproductive Biology, and similar research into male contraception is also being carried out at Manchester University.

Professor David Baird, of the Edinburgh centre, said: "I think it is technically possible, and I think if it is marketed some men and some couples will use it."

"But how long that will take will depend on whether pharmaceutical companies make the decision to take this sort of combination for product development."

SOCIETY

State pension should be doubled

The Government must honour its pre-election pledges to make ageing issues a priority, the charity Age Concern said yesterday, adding that by 2031 nearly 23 per cent of the population will be over pensionable age, and the number of over-75s will double in the next 50 years.

Although the basic state pension is £62.45, the charity says that a single pensioner needs £125 for a modest but adequate income. "The new Government must make it a priority to work out how the figure can be achieved."

Access to the NHS must continue to be on a "need, not ability to pay" basis, and a national commission should be set up to investigate discrimination in the NHS - at present 20 per cent of coronary care units operate an age-related admissions policy.

Glenda Cooper

EDUCATION

University applications hit record

A record number of students has applied to university this year, but the total applying for teacher-training has fallen sharply, according to figures from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service.

So far there have been 409,318 applications, and the final figure is likely to be around 450,000.

The fall in applicants reported at this time last year has been halted. Applications are up by 9.7 per cent in biochemistry, 8.5 per cent in physics, 2.4 per cent in biology and 1.9 per cent in chemistry. There are also more applicants in business and management studies, computer science and English.

However, applications for teacher training are down by 11 per cent and fewer applications have been made in civil, electronic and mechanical engineering.

Judith Judd

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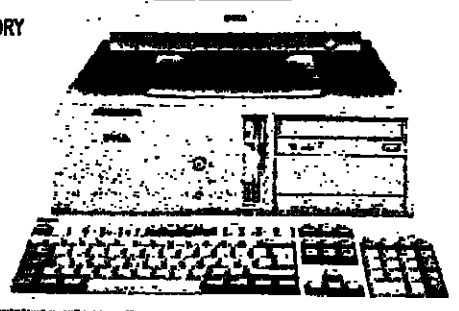
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Rise of the white collar 'factory'

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

The year 1984 proved to be a bit of a washout for George Orwell, but the world of work might bear investigation for those seeking evidence that the old boy may have had a point. In particular, "call centres" established by an increasing number of service-based companies have a distinctly Orwellian feel to them. In these "white-collar factories" hundreds of employees are arranged in serried ranks to handle customers' calls over the telephone. The centres have sprung up with the rapid growth of new businesses, such as direct selling of insurance and telebanking.

Take the Nat West "telebanking centre" in Harrogate, where a cast of 100 or more sit under the eye of an electronic box which measures their collective performance. On it are displayed the number of calls waiting to be dealt with and the number already processed. There is no hiding place for employees, because their output is also monitored individually.

On the walls of the vast open-plan office are exhortations to maximum effort. In the canteen there is a notice stating that unauthorised meetings are not permitted.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of this seeming industrial totalitarianism is that most staff, largely young and female, feel the working environment is quite normal and rather enjoy it, according to research group Incomes Data Services.

Ann Gunter, head of telephony at Nat West, says her staff in Harrogate are "very, very proud of what they do" and



Cutting edge: Clothes-factory workers, at their sewing-machine desks (above), have been succeeded by call-centre labourers (right) Main photograph: Tom Pilston

apart from the odd niggles "have an awful lot of fun".

Austin Knight, the recruitment consultants, have found however that employees harbour private misgivings. A survey of 1,000 call-centre employees revealed that more than half felt morale was low.

In many of these new factories - whose numbers are rising rapidly, according to the IDS research published today - staff are stopped from personalising their work area. "That might be seen as a sign of resistance," according to Alastair Hatchett, of the research group.

Edward Humphrey, of specialist publication *Call Centre Magazine*, believes the phenomenon had emerged because companies are increasingly try-

ing to compete, on the basis of service. "It can seem quite Orwellian. Service levels have to be met, calls have to be answered, inquiries have to be dealt with quickly. Companies are also trying to keep costs down so they have to get the maximum out of staff. Call-centre employees are the hardest worked in the finance industry."

Call centres effectively made their debut in this country when Peter Wood at the Royal Bank of Scotland had his lucrative brainwave about customers buying insurance over the telephone.

He subsequently sold his interest in Direct Line for £24m. Mr Hatchett reports that around 1.2 per cent of the national workforce is now em-

ployed in such centres - around 250,000 people - and by 2001 it will have increased to 2.2 per cent, reaching one million shortly after.

Most have been established outside London and the south-east in areas where greenfield sites are plentiful, where regional grants are available and where employees are content with lower salaries.

The north of England and Scotland have witnessed a veritable "explosion" in the number of centres, according to IDS.

It may have come as a surprise to customers of London Electricity for instance when a call to query a bill will invariably be answered by someone with a north-eastern accent. The

company's billing and administrative centre is in Sunderland. Salaries for trained operators vary between £9,500 and £11,500 a year, while those with foreign languages or a technical expertise can expect more.

The proliferation of bonuses shift premiums and overtime smacks of traditional manual employment, according to IDS. Mr Hatchett believes we are witnessing the "industrialisation of white-collar work".

However, if call centres are seen as depersonalising the relationship between service and customer, there could be worse to come. American business gurus point out that such activity is already passé as the Internet replaces personal telephone contact.

Now it's e-mail gridlock

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Having beaten traffic gridlock to get to their offices, American workers now face the stress of an information gridlock caused by dealing with an average of 178 e-mail messages a day, according to a new report.

The jams caused by modern communications methods are creating an information block which needs to be cleared up as urgently as congestion on the roads, the report says. Getting important news through is becoming increasingly hard.

A survey by the Institute for

the Future, the Gallup Organisation, and San Jose State University, asked more than 1,000 workers from large US firms how they use electronic communications at work.

"This phenomenon is beginning to have a seismic effect on people's professional and private lives," said Meredith Fischer, future strategist at Pitney Bowes, the company that commissioned the survey.

The survey found most of the workers favoured the telephone for communicating outside their company, but preferred e-mail for getting in touch with their own colleagues.

People were under added stress because the proliferation of new communications makes them easy to get hold of. Individuals want to maximise their access to co-workers, but minimise access to themselves, the report said.

The availability of office e-mail systems, and of electronic means of sending multiple copies of messages to huge numbers of people, has made it easier to send data to people without determining how important it is. The result is that despite the dream of a "paperless office" the number of memos has not necessarily decreased.

Students told not to go out alone after murder

Kate Watson-Smyth

Police yesterday warned students in Northampton not to go out alone as they launched a hunt for the killer of a music student whose body was found dumped in a park.

Ryan McEwan-King, 22, was sexually assaulted and strangled as she walked home from a pub in Northampton on Friday evening. Her body was found

near a bowling green in the Racecourse park the next day.

Detective Chief Inspector David Arniger said it was possible that Miss McEwan-King had been attacked by someone she did not know who was lying in wait for her.

"Our advice, particularly to students, is not to walk in the vicinity of the Racecourse alone," he said.

"Clearly we have a killer on

our hands and we are doing everything we can to find the person responsible for Ryan's death."

The fair-haired student, who was only 4ft 5in tall and weighed less than five stone, was due to graduate in two weeks' time.

She shared a flat with two other students who have been moved to other addresses for their own safety as police fear the killer may have a key to the flat.

Miss McEwan-King, from Nempthar in Lanarkshire, was a music and drama student at Nene College in Northampton.

The youngest of five children, her parents Robin and Margaret McEwan-King said they were devastated by the murder of their daughter and spoke proudly of their "little girl with the big voice".

"She was such a profession-

al performer. She had such a beautiful voice. You'll never hear that voice," said her father last night.

Holding back tears, Mr McEwan-King, 54, said his daughter, had last visited home only two weeks ago to celebrate her birthday.

"We heard about this while we were at the Royal Highland Show ground at Ingliston where Margaret was showing sheep

which Ryan had helped us to prepare," he said.

"We still don't know exactly what happened. We are absolutely devastated by this."

Miss McEwan-King last talked to her parents the night before she died.

"She wanted to know how we'd fared at the Shetland Sheep Championship and she was over the moon when she found out we'd won," he said.

"She had such a wonderful rapport with animals and she had helped prepared the sheep for the show."

The family moved to Lanarkshire five years ago and Miss McEwan-King had just started a part-time job at Marks & Spencer. She had hoped to become a professional singer.

Her father said: "Music was her first love. She was extremely gifted."



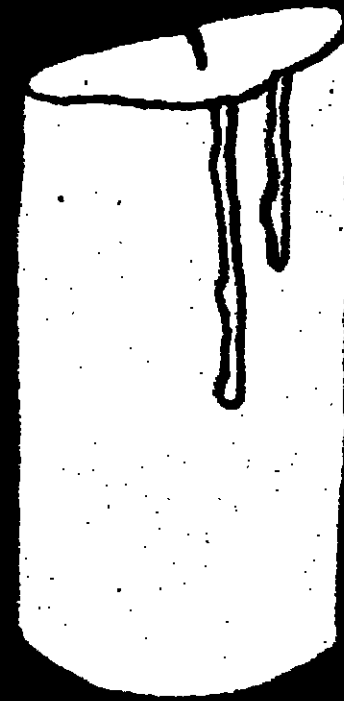
Ryan McEwan-King: Due to graduate in two weeks



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Scargill barred as trustee of charities

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

Miners' union leader Arthur Scargill has been suspended from the chairmanship of two charities after accusations that virtually all the funds of one were due to be transferred to another.

The Charity Commissioners took the action after an investigation into the activities of the Yorkshire Miners' Welfare Trust Fund Scheme and Yorkshire Miners Welfare Convalescent Homes. It is understood that more than £800,000 out of total assets estimated at



Scargill: Suspended from posts on miners' charities

£920,000 was to be switched from the trust fund to the convalescent homes organisation.

Commissioners have suspended Mr Scargill - who claims that he acted in the best interests of the beneficiaries of the fund - from his two chairmanships allegedly because not all the trustees of the donor charity were fully aware of the plan.

It is also understood that the action was taken on the grounds that gifts have to be made on the basis that a charity can meet the full range of legitimate calls on its resources, not just one. Trustees must ensure that the donation is justified and that the organisation can afford it.

The convalescent homes charity operates two establish-

ments, one of which is owned by the National Union of Mineworkers, of which Mr Scargill is president. Richard Fries, chief charity commissioner, said there was therefore a potential conflict of interest because of Mr Scargill's posts in the two charities and the union. He emphasised that the investigation was still continuing.

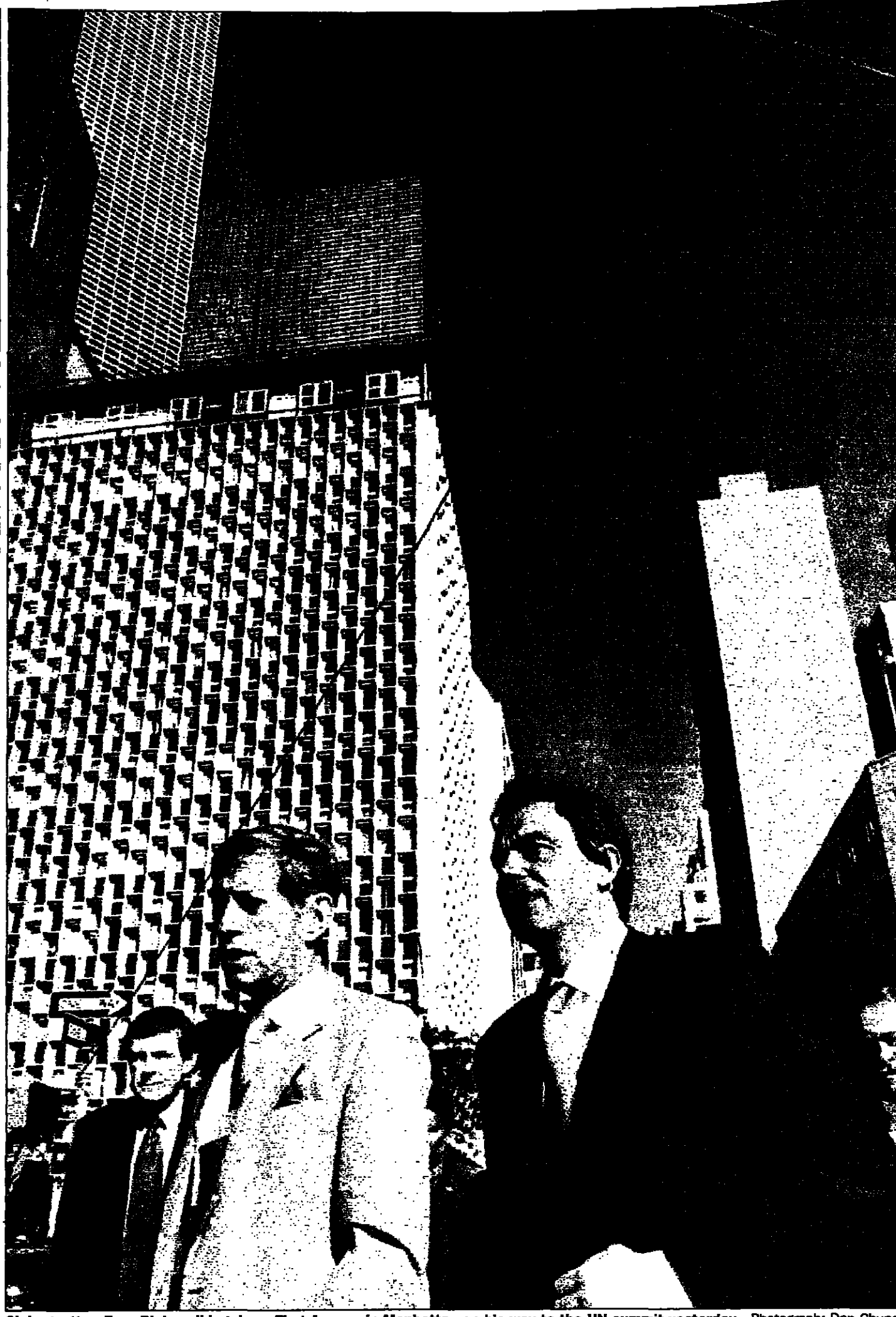
Commissioners intervened last January after complaints from trustees about alleged mismanagement and maladministration of the funds.

Mr Scargill, who was said to have adopted a "pivotal" role in the two charities, was served with a notice yesterday morning as he arrived at the Barnsley headquarters of the NUM. The action means that he will not be able to act as a trustee of the charities during the course of the investigation. It is understood that the queries over the transfer of the £800,000 may only be one of the issues concerning some of Mr Scargill's fellow trustees about the way in which the two organisations were managed.

A spokeswoman for the commissioners said, however, there was no question of the miners' leader profiting personally from any of the dealings. "The commissioners have taken this action to protect the assets of the two charities," she said.

The trust fund was set up in 1984 to benefit pitmen, former pitmen and their families. The convalescent homes were established in 1966.

In a statement, Mr Scargill said he had always acted in the interests of the beneficiaries of the charities and that all the matters raised by the commissioners had been brought about by the privatisation of British Coal. He said: "The trustees, including myself as chairman, have continued to take advice from the trusts' legal advisers including leading counsel who specialises in trust law and are satisfied that at all times the trustees and I have acted in the best interests of the beneficiaries."



Globe-trotter: Tony Blair walking down First Avenue in Manhattan on his way to the UN summit yesterday Photograph: Dan Chung

Blair the traveller speaks for the children

David Usborne
New York

Tony Blair took to the podium at the United Nations yesterday morning - the same echoing and marble spot where Khrushchev banged his shoe so many decades ago - and made a plea for the children. His own children.

The mini-Blairs, uprooted from their familiar surroundings of Islington in north London, are not too enthused about Daddy's new job. It seems, "My three young children in London complain I am never at home," the Prime Minister lamented to the 50-odd heads of state and government ranged before him.

Considerably more bright-eyed than most of his counterparts at the unfortunately named Ungass meeting on the global environment, Mr Blair himself did not appear too battered by his travels. His transport, after all, was Concorde, which was waiting to take him back to his brood again last night. It is true, though, that his new life has so far turned him into something closer to a globe-trotter-for-Britain than a custodian of Nor 10.

In little more than four weeks, he has attended summits in Nordwijk in the Netherlands, Malmö in Norway, Bonn, Paris (twice), Amsterdam for the European Council, Denver at the weekend and finally the Apple.

But our leader's little ones should forgive him this particular gathering, he argued, because they care about the environment (which is good to know). "If there is one summit they would want me at, it is this one".

Things green have not been the only concern of Mr Blair here, however. His first call with his wife, Cheri, on Sunday night was the home of Manhattan's most celebrated Brits, Harold Evans, the former *Times* editor turned publishing tsar, and his wife, *New Yorker* editor Tina Brown. Among those there for the feel-good Blair vibrations: Lauren Bacall, Henry Kissinger, and all the famous and chic of the United States television industry.

Glimmering indeed, that do was meant as a thanks to Mr Evans and others for their money-raising efforts here during the election campaign. John Prescott last night joined a meeting of the US branch of the Labour Party. And before heading for home last night, Mr Blair peddled one of his pet themes - New Labour, the "natural party of business" - at a roundtable hosted by BZW with the cream of Wall Street and US enterprise.

But there were also words in the Ungass speech for offspring other than his own. His pledge, he insisted, was to ensure the "halving of the number of children in the world living in abject poverty by 2015". The message from the Prime Minister in New York: kids everywhere, from Downing Street to Rwanda, be happy.

Senior MP who helped suppress Saudi report wants it published

Kim Sengupta

The senior MP who played a key role in suppressing a report into the massive Al Yamamah defence contract with Saudi Arabia has said there is now a case for reconsidering the matter. Evidence emerged during the Jonathan Aitken libel trial that substantial and secret commissions had been paid in relation to the £2.6bn deal.

And in another development yesterday, Scotland Yard confirmed it has launched an investigation into allegations that the former chief secretary to the treasury and defence procurement minister has committed perjury, and attempted to pervert the course of justice.

As chairman of the Commons Public Accounts Com-

mittee, Robert Sheldon decided with the senior Tory on the Committee, Lord Shaw, that the report into the contract by the National Audit Office should not be made public. He and Lord Shaw were the only ones to see the report, which was denied to fellow members of the Public Accounts Committee on grounds of national interest.

Yesterday Mr Sheldon said: "Because of the time that has gone by, there is a case for looking at the papers again to decide whether the report should now be made public."

Mr Sheldon, now the chairman of the Public Accounts Commission, added that he would be pressing for wider powers for such investigations.

He said: "Our job was to ensure there was no misuse of public money, and we established that. However, we were only able to look within the Ministry of Defence. We were not able to follow public money outside the department, once it is paid to contractors, so we do not know what was done with it."

"We need those powers, they exist in the United States... The reason we decided not to publish the report was because the Saudis may have become upset and embarrassed at some of the contents of the report and cancelled the contract. That would have cost thousands of jobs."

Before Mr Aitken withdrew his libel action, the High Court had heard evidence from David Trigger, a former executive of BMARC, where Mr Aitken had been a director in the past. Cross-examined by George

Carman, QC, counsel for the defence, Mr Trigger said: "The Al-Yamamah contract is a very complicated one that has involvement with the Government, British Aerospace, and other people."

"It would be very difficult to put a figure on commission. Commission was obviously paid but my understanding is that all my work connected with the contract is governed by the Official Secrets Act."

Mystery surrounds Mr Aitken's September 1993 visit to the Paris Ritz Hotel where he met Said Ayas, a friend and business associate, and a former assistant to Saudi Prince Mohammed who paid the bill.

Mr Aitken had claimed he was on a family holiday. But he was shown to have lied under oath.

Number changes ring up the bill for millions of mobile phone users

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Britain's seven million mobile phone users will have to change their phone numbers within the next four years, under a scheme proposed by the telecoms regulator Ofcom.

The proposal will cause disruption and extra expense for long-standing users, who will have to change stationery and inform contacts. Ofcom claims that the move is justified because industry figures show that "on average" users only keep a mobile phone for two and a half years.

The four main networks have been quick to point out that the figure is misleading because many people have actually kept the same mobile phone for up to 12 years, and that the low average is caused by corporate clients who sign up for a few months to take advantage of cheap deals but then move on to other networks when those expire.

Phone operators also say that the move will delay the introduction of "number portability" - by which somebody could retain the same phone number even though they change between networks. Portability would reduce the cost of changing between networks, because it cuts down on reprinting of stationery, for example.

The proposal has been largely overlooked since its publication earlier this year, because it came at the same time as suggestions for new numbering systems for cities across the country. It would mean that all mobile phone numbers would start with

the prefix 07, which would also be used for pagers. Vodafone will begin allocating the first such numbers later this summer, after receiving an allocation from Ofcom earlier this month.

Presently, mobile phone numbers can begin with a number of prefixes, including 09, 08, 04 and 03. In 1995, following the "Phoneday" in which all fixed numbers were changed to start with 01, Ofcom declared that 04 numbers would in future denote mobile phones. But then it reversed its decision.

The regulator said yesterday that the reason for introducing the 07 prefix was that people wanted to know when they were calling a mobile phone, as the existing variety meant it was not always obvious from the number.

But one network operator

pointed out yesterday that this solution will not be perfect because besides mobile phones the 07 prefix will include "personal" numbers, which are guaranteed to reach any number, fixed or mobile, and pagers. All could have different pricing regimes. "We're not as convinced as Ofcom that grouping all the numbers under the 07 prefix will help people know what the charge for phoning will be," said one industry source.

Charges for calling mobile phones can vary enormously. The technical cost of changing mobile phone numbers will almost all be borne by the networks, rather than the customers. "The market in the UK is too competitive for us to do anything else," said a spokesman for Vodafone.

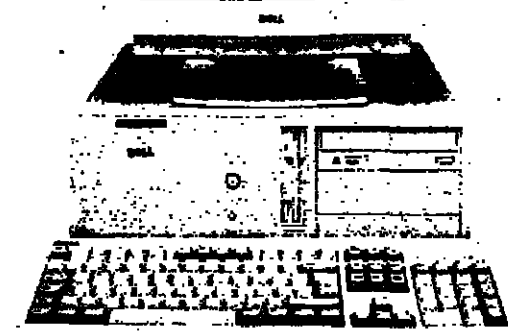
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Poll confirms Mandelson's grip on Labour



Peter Mandelson: Sits on 11 Cabinet committees

John Rentoul

Britain's opinion-formers think Peter Mandelson is the most powerful figure in the Labour government, ranking behind only the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, according to a survey for *The Independent*.
Despite his status at Minister of State level outside the Cabinet, 37 per cent said Mr Mandelson would be among those with "most influence over government policy during the next five years".
In a poll of 100 business leaders, civil servants, MPs, trade unionists and media editors carried out by Opinion Leader Research, Mr Mandelson pushed Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and John

Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, into fourth and fifth places.
The opinion leaders' panel was asked to name the three individuals they expected to be most influential. While Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, was named by 64, Mr Cook was named by 24 and Mr Prescott by only 11.
Unusually for a non-Cabinet member, Mr Mandelson sits on 11 of the 19 Cabinet committees set up by Tony Blair and last week he was appointed to take charge of the Millennium Dome project, which many Cabinet ministers want scrapped but which is close to the Prime Minister's heart.
However, when asked to rate which Labour politicians have

Power of persuasion: how they shape up

Who will be most influential over government policy?

1. Tony Blair - 83;
2. Gordon Brown - 64;
3. Peter Mandelson - 37;
4. Robin Cook - 24;
5. John Prescott - 11;
6. Frank Field - 9;
7. Bill Clinton - 7;
8. Margaret Beckett - 7;
9. Helmut Kohl - 7;

Which Labour politicians have impressed most?

1. Tony Blair 79;
2. Gordon Brown 77;
3. Robin Cook 54;
4. John Prescott 14;
5. Peter Mandelson 13;
6. Mo Mowlam 11;
7. David Blunkett 10;
8. Frank Field 8;
9. Margaret Beckett 7;
10. Jack Cunningham 4.

been most impressive in the Government's early days, Mr Cook comes third, scoring 54, behind Mr Blair on 79 and Mr Brown on 77. Mr Mandelson, on 13, trails in fifth place behind Mr Prescott on 14. Mo Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, scored 11, and David Blunkett at educa-

tion and employment scored 10.
Opinion-formers also expect the Government to carry through radical reforms of the welfare state, judging by the rating accorded to Frank Field, number two in the Department of Social Security, who scored nine for "most influential" and eight for "most impressive". Mr Field has called for a recasting of the benefits system to end its "culture of dependency".
The range of influences over Mr Blair's government is reflected in the three-way tie for seventh place in the influence rankings, with Bill Clinton, Helmut Kohl and Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor, each attracting seven votes.
The rating for Mr Kohl, echoing the Conservative ad-

vertisement during the election campaign showing Mr Blair on the German Chancellor's knee, no doubt reflects Euro-sceptic dismay at Labour's perceived pro-European stance (there were also two votes each for Kenneth Clarke and Jacques Santer, the European Commission President, and seven mentions of "the European Union", although panellists were asked to name individuals).
Derry Irvine is a more informed choice: the leading barrister has been a close confidant of the Prime Minister since Mr Blair trained as a lawyer in his chambers in the Seventies. He played a central role in Labour's election team and now sits on eight Cabinet committees and

chairs three of them. Our opinion leaders have an overwhelmingly positive and optimistic view of the new Government. By a margin of 77 to 7 they are happy with its performance so far, by a 58 to 29 majority they disagree that "sleaze has become an inherent part of the British political system", and by 63 to 17 they say Mr Blair is likely to succeed in cleaning up government.
They also expect the Labour government to fulfil all its five key pledges, even the general promise to "ensure low inflation, raise investment and strengthen the economy" - which 47 rated "likely" against 32 "unlikely".
Interviews were carried out from 9 to 16 June.

Duncan will keep MPs 'on message'

Colin Brown and Fran Abrams

The Conservatives' own "Peter Mandelson" figure, Alan Duncan, was rewarded yesterday for his success in running William Hague's campaign for the Tory party leadership with promotion to the Opposition Leader's office.
In a series of appointments to his political office, Mr Hague rewarded Mr Duncan by making him his Parliamentary Political Secretary.
It is an unpaid appointment, but like Mr Mandelson's post in the Labour Party, it carries untold influence.
Mr Duncan will be in charge of trying to ensure that the party and the 164 Tory MPs stick to the agreed line on policy, raising fears among pro-European Tory MPs that it will mean enforcing opposition to the single European currency.
Mr Duncan said that he would be "helping to ensure that the Conservative Party speaks with one voice".
Like Tony Blair's minister without portfolio, Mr Duncan is regarded as a Machiavellian figure behind the leader of his party, who has made enemies for his razor-like ability with the

parliamentary put-down. He is also rated highly for his spin doctoring skills and was the driving force behind the slick and skilful presentation of Mr Hague as a "fresh start".
Acting as the go-between for the Conservative leader and his party chairman, Lord Parkinson, Mr Duncan, will play a crucial role in the shaping of the image of the new Tory party under Mr Hague, and the sharpening of its attack on Labour.
Mr Hague also announced four other paid appointments to his private office, including two MPs who lost their seats at the election: Charles Hendry, the former Tory MP for High Peak, chief-of-staff, Sebastian Coe, former Tory MP for Falmouth and Camborne, as his deputy chief-of-staff, George Osborne, former political adviser to Douglas Hogg, as his political secretary, and Mark Fox, a former Central Office researcher as political office assistant.
Meanwhile, new dissent broke out in the Conservative Party as the foundation that ran John Redwood's campaign office launched a full-frontal attack on the leadership.
The row over the future of the Conservative 2000 think-tank blew up after weekend

newspaper reports suggested that it would be closed down now that Mr Redwood had been offered a Shadow Cabinet post.
Yesterday the director of the think-tank, Hywell Williams, accused Conservative Central Office of briefing against Mr Redwood through fear that he would build up an alternative power-base in his old office.
A *Sunday Express* headline on a story about the foundation's demise claimed: "Hague gets tough in warning to plotters."
Mr Williams said that as director of the organisation he intended to keep Conservative 2000 open.
"One of the things that divided the Tory party during the last period in government was the way in which the centre briefed against members of its own Cabinet. This must not happen again, but what happens first of all is this," he said.
Mr Redwood refused to be drawn into the row, though. He said he had removed his personal belongings from the foundation's Westminster office yesterday afternoon.
"They gave me a lot of support, but I am not offering to do anything for them at the moment," he said.



Action man: Sports minister Tony Banks demonstrating technique for the Commons vs Lords tug of war at Westminster Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Ashdown attacks windfall tax as gimmick

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Labour's windfall tax on privatised utilities will hit Britain's poorest citizens rather than the "fat cats", Paddy Ashdown said last night. The Liberal Democrat leader told a party gathering at Westminster that the tax

was "a gimmick, turned into a policy, made into a flagship".
The money the Government planned to use to fund its Welfare-to-Work programme - around £3bn - was not its to spend, he said. It had been paid in charges by the public and should be given back to them.
The attack was the strongest

yet by him on Labour's plans.
Labour's focus on taxing the privatised utilities was similar to the Tory government's tactic of paying for income tax cuts by forcing council tax up and pinning the blame on local authorities, Mr Ashdown said. In this case, the Government's ideological enemies were not Lab-

our councils, but utility bosses.
By committing itself to the Conservatives' spending plans Labour had condemned teachers to the sack and hospital wards to closure. If the Chancellor did not provide increased investment to prevent these cuts the Liberal Democrats would vote against the Budget, he said.

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Higher education: The cost and supply of university accommodation is a growing problem, especially in the South-east

Students learn hard way with higher rents

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Thousands of university students are paying out more than their entire grant in rent as prices rocket, according to a new book.

Rent in both in halls of residence and privately owned houses varies widely between and within different university towns, say the authors.

This year's *Student Book*, based on information from 280 universities and colleges, paints a bleak picture of student accommodation. Some have little or no university halls or housing.

Thames Valley University has none while Westminster has room for 11 per cent of its students. Cambridge, by comparison, can house 85 per cent.

Half-board in university halls costs between £62 and £79 a week at Birmingham compared with £53 at Cardiff.

Self-catering in hall costs between £29 and £51 at Manchester compared with £32 at York. Private housing may cost as little as £25 a week in Bradford or as much as £50 in Bristol or £100 in London.

"Student accommodation costs a lot. Some student unions report students paying over 100 per cent of their grant in rent. If you are lucky enough to have a choice, go for living in college," the book advises.

The grant, now £1,710 a year outside London, was frozen by the previous government which introduced loans for student maintenance.

Klaus Boehm, one of the book's authors, said that both private landlords and universities could pose problems for students.

One Manchester student was sued for a year's rent after he left his rented house which had no lock on the door, was unsuitable and which was repeatedly burgled.

Another student arrived at a new university for his first year with a letter guaranteeing accommodation and was told there was none. Only after his father threatened to expose

the vice-chancellor did some excellent housing materialise.

The book says: "The amount of college/university accommodation is astonishingly variable. A very few universities and colleges are aiming to accommodate all their students; quite a number aim to house at least first-year students."

Mr Boehm said: "For historical reasons, the former polytechnics tend to have the less student accommodation than the old universities."

He says that the most noticeable change in student life recently has been the increasing number who work in term-time to make ends meet. Term-time work is barred at Oxford and Cambridge but most other universities are resigned to it.

Work is available on many campuses and some universities, for example, Aberdeen and Warwick, try to help students find jobs off campus.

Douglas Trainer, president of the National Union of Students, said: "Rent prices have gone through the roof and for many students this is their biggest outgoing. Rents in the South-east and, particularly in London, are very high and, increasingly, students feel they cannot afford to study in these places. It limits people's opportunities and choice."

If all else fails, the book suggests squatting (except in Scotland, where the law is stricter) though it warns that the law needs watching and that they will need to react quickly to landlords, especially if they go to court.

■ *The NatWest Student Book 1998*; Klaus Boehm and Jenny Lees-Spalding; Trotman & Co; £9.99.

Comparing the cost

Examples of average weekly rent for students

Bradford University:
£59.90 half board;
£35.15-£53.50 self-catering;
private, £25-£30

Bristol University:
half board from £86;
self-catering from £32;
private, £40-50

Cambridge University:
£30-50 plus meals
(colleges vary);
private, £30-50

Edinburgh University:
£67-77 full board;
£42 self-catering;
private, £40-45

Middlesex University:
£46-54 self-catering;
private, £45-60

Oxford University:
£59-£63.70 half board;
£33-£57 self-catering
(colleges vary);
private, £40-60

Source: *The NatWest Student Book 1998*



Lean days: Students arriving at Cambridge, where they are banned from taking term-time jobs to help pay the bills

Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

'It's a question of affording a degree'

Khushpal Assi, 21, is a second-year law and management student at Middlesex. He isn't taking out a student loan - he "needed to, but never got round to it", and will take one this coming year. He has an overdraft of only £60 and doesn't get a grant, however he is completely reliant on his parents and holiday work. His college accommodation costs around £50 a week, and his bill doesn't include electricity.

Tom Stampford finished his finals in Geography and Geology a week ago at Keele University. His debts are £6500; a £2000 overdraft and three student loans. This figure is "about average" among his friends, "and inevitable. I knew the situation before I came and what I was getting in to." Despite rela-

Undergraduates tell *The Independent* of their experiences

tively low rents, students at Keele have had to face falling government funding. As a result, the *Students' Union* encourages its members to work. Paul Cornell, the union president, explains that they "actively try to recruit students. We've got to. It's a question of not having a degree if you can't afford it."

Dave Flynn, 20, is a second-year English undergraduate at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford; a relatively poor college. He's had "nothing, apart from a £120 exam prize which I won four weeks ago and still hasn't been paid". This will go straight into his bank account, currently overdrawn by £990, forcing him to work every holiday. He expects to earn

around £1800 this summer by working for his college organising conferences. In Oxford, students are not allowed to do paid work during term-time, though rooms can cost up to £100 a week. Dave's parents give him £700 a year, and he has a £1000 grant.

Anessa Chawla, 20, is a second-year Law student at the LSE. She only gets a nominal grant and had to take out a student loan of £1000. She also has a weekend job. Her parents are contributing a lot towards her living expenses. "A lot of the students here are foreigners who are wealthy enough to study here and have no problems with the high rent. The home students tend

to have more financial problems and have to work to meet the living costs. There should be more subsidies for students rather than loans which have to be paid back."

Deepa Hundalani, 20, is studying Social Policy and Government at the LSE. She's had two £250 overdrafts, but, although many students at the LSE work for money during term-time, she hasn't taken up a job because "the responsibility and commitment required in a part time job really conflict with University life, especially towards end of the year when you've got exams". She's not as desperate as others though; her parents contribute to her living expenses and she's living at home. University accommodation costs around £40-£75 a week.

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news

Strike wipes 300 trains from timetable

Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

Hundreds of trains may be permanently lost from the summer timetable as a result of a rail dispute on a key part of the London commuter network.

Senior directors from Connex South Central said they are considering plans to "formalise the emergency timetable in order to reduce the uncertainty for

passengers." This would mean 300 less trains - nearly 20 per cent of scheduled services - than were supposed to run.

The dispute centres on a restructuring deal involving pay, and a shorter week, as well as on working practices for train drivers. Management says that it will not negotiate with the drivers union, Aslef, while its members are out on strike.

Yesterday, union represen-

tatives met officials of the conciliation service, Acas, to explain their side of a dispute. A spokesman for Aslef said that it was an opportunity to "brief Acas on the union's position".

The company, which operates trains from Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire into London Bridge and Victoria, is also considering hiring drivers to replace those staff unwilling to co-operate with the new working arrange-

ments. "A lot of drivers have been made redundant in recent years and it would not be difficult to convert them to our network," said one Connex director.

A spokesman for Opra, the office of passenger rail franchising, which now oversees the network, doubted whether any changes to the timetable could be made quickly. He added: "We would expect Connex to see us first."

The action by drivers has seen the cancellation of up to 435 trains - 30 per cent of the total timetable - on some weekends. The company has limited the effect on commuters by spreading the cuts throughout the train schedule.

A complex penalty regime, experts claim, will mean that the cancellations could cost the company more than £100,000 a day. This is disputed by the com-

pany. Senior directors say that they will not be liable for fines because the cancellations have been caused by industrial action.

The dispute has soured relations between management and the union. Earlier this month, directors threatened to take action against Aslef, the drivers' union. And Connex South Central is expected to end the arrangement whereby union subscriptions are deducted from

wages - thus depriving Aslef of substantial income.

No talks took place last week while Aslef held its annual conference. Directors had considered appealing to the union's executive in order to bring the dispute to a halt, but have not been able to reach it while the annual meeting took place.

Aslef maintains that it has already worked out similar arrangements with 20 of the 25

operating companies. The union points out that, unlike many other operators, Connex sought to impose the deal upon drivers - despite its rejection by the workforce.

"We are available for talks any time. Until the company produces something our negotiators can recommend to our members the situation remains," said a spokesman for the union.

The ancient Chinese texts that failed test of time

Jojo Moyes

A respected Chinese collector of ancient manuscripts ran a huge forging operation, creating fake texts so convincing that they ended up in the British Library's own collection, and were only discovered more than half a century later, it emerged yesterday.

Staff at the library have discovered that up to 600 supposedly ancient Chinese texts from their 15,000-strong archive were found to date from closer to 1940 than AD400.

New tests, carried out as part of a process to log the collection onto a digital database, revealed that many stemmed from a counterfeit operation run by Shengduo Li and his family from the turn of the century.

Mr Li's scam is believed to have begun in 1911 when he persuaded a Chinese official to divert to his house an ox cart transporting a large collection of real manuscripts from the Silk Road site of Dunhuang to the National Library of China.

This grew, until he master-

mind an operation forging copies by the hundred, with serial numbers on the authentic manuscripts being altered to tally with the forgeries. His reputation as an eminent collector apparently made him immune to question. Some of the fakes are believed to have been produced after his death in 1935.

The manuscripts were discovered as a result of the transfer of the collection onto a digital database. Japanese scholars, who had limited access to their own manuscripts, had come to compare their own copies with the British Library's and discovered a number of clues.

"The level of sophistication of the forgeries is quite interesting. But it's not surprising, as the Chinese have a long tradition and tend to do things as they have for hundreds of years,

such as paper-making and calligraphy," said Dr Susan Whitfield, the British Library's curator of Chinese manuscripts.

"There was a lot of turmoil at the time they were made, so the fact that they could still find time is surprising. But they still



True and false: Dr Susan Whitfield, head of the International Dunhuang project, displaying a genuine 9th-century Lotus Sutra manuscript (left) and a fake Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

fell down, sometimes in trying to be too clever. For example, using forms of words that date from BC200 rather than AD400," Dr Whitfield added. "You would have to be a real scholar to know the difference between those two. Many peo-

ple have been fooled, and many continue to be fooled."

The fake manuscripts are scrolls, imitating the genuine versions of calligraphy on dyed yellow paper. One of the newest clues to their lack of veracity has been provided by a method

perfected at Queen's University, Belfast, which can detect whether the paper has been dyed with a bark derivative from the amur cork tree, as with the real items.

Dr Whitfield stressed yesterday that Shengduo Li was not

the only person involved in faking Chinese manuscripts, and that "many local figures" were also involved.

The Chinese themselves, she said, were relaxed about the find, as they had a large number of originals. The Japanese,

who had a much smaller collection, were "sensitive" about it. The findings will be discussed at a closed conference of specialists next week.

The fate of the faked manuscripts is not uncertain. "We will keep them out of curiosity val-

ue. They are still manuscripts of up to 100 years old and interesting in themselves for a whole lot of other reasons, like technology, paper-making in the 20th century," she said. "For some scholars that may actually be more interesting."

UNWIND.

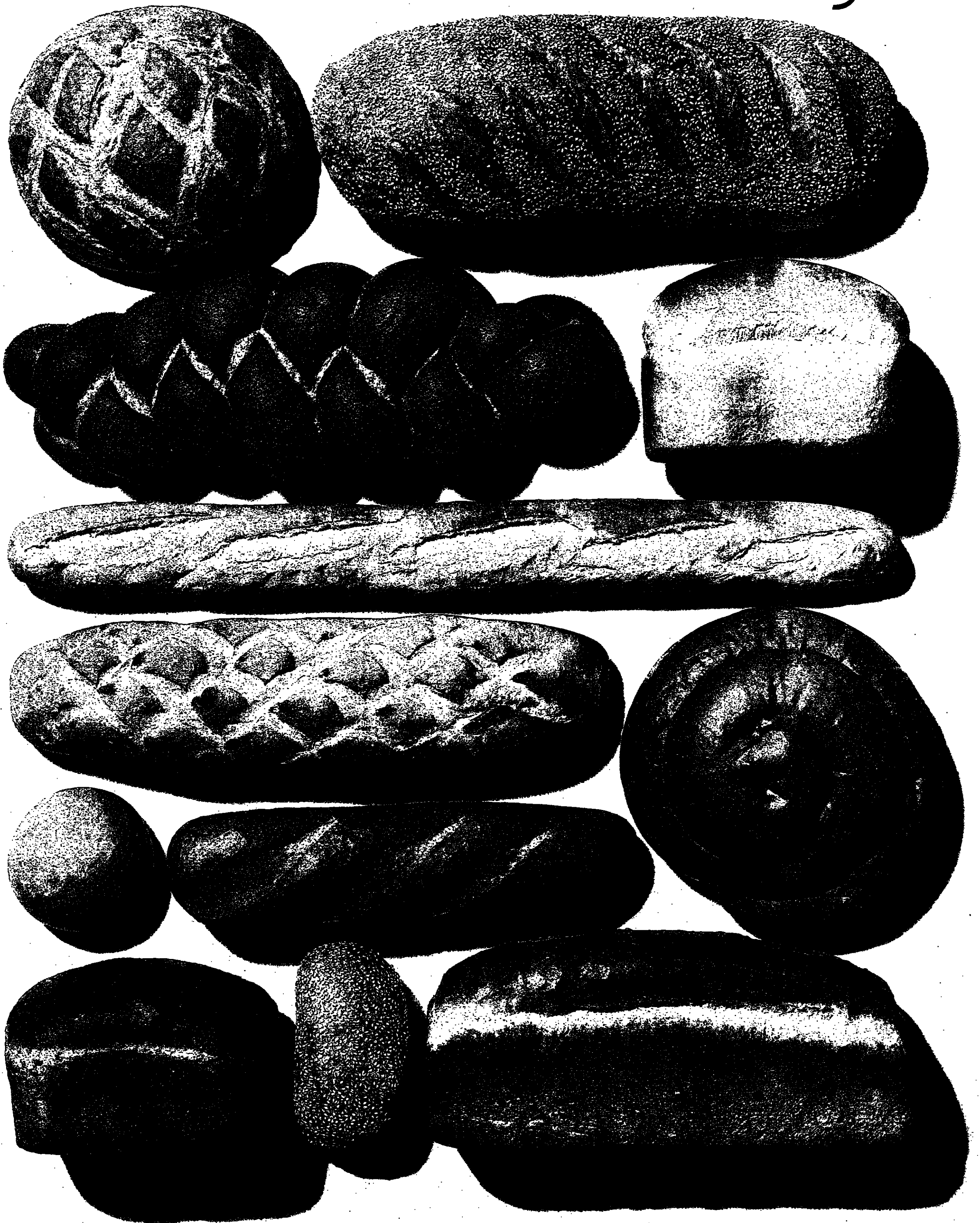
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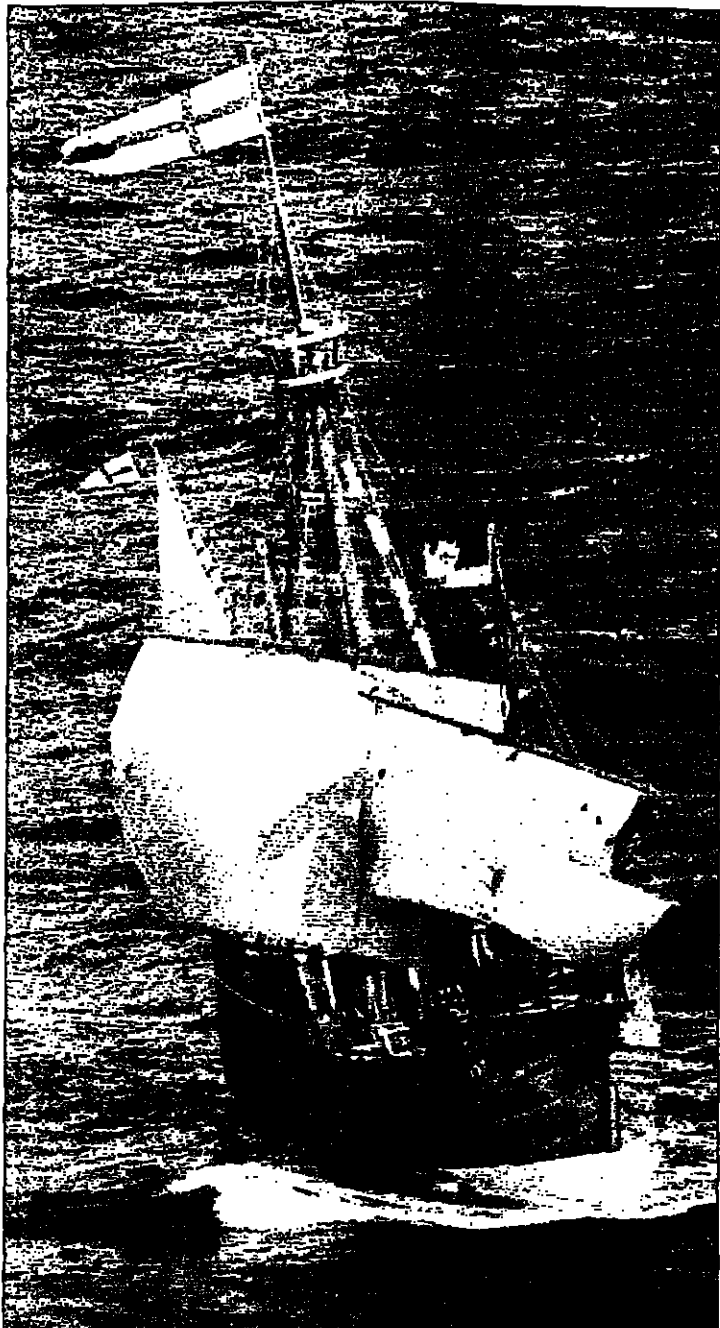
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news



All at sea: The *Matthew*, a replica of the ship in which Cabot reached North America, nearing Newfoundland. Photograph: AP

Canadian Indians prepare ambush for Cabot voyagers

Ian Burrell

A voyage re-tracing John Cabot's 15th-century journey to Newfoundland is set to sail into a storm of controversy when it reaches Canada today. Protesters from the Innu nation, a tribe of North American Indians, will be waiting on the quayside, intending to spoil the celebrations, due to be attended by the Queen, who is visiting Canada this week.

They are angry that an event which led to the deaths of thousands of Indians from Western diseases should be regarded as cause for a jamboree. They are also furious that low-level flying exercises by the Royal Air Force are driving away caribou herds on which they have relied for food and clothing. The voyage by the replica of Cabot's ship, the *Matthew*, began in Bristol seven weeks ago and has also attracted criticism for its all-male crew. David Alan-Williams, the skipper, denied being prejudiced. "The few (women) who applied just didn't work out," he said. Now the 80ft, three-masted vessel, which cost £1.5m of Cornish millionaire Mike Slade's money to build, faces further outcry. Katie Rich, leader of the 16,000 Innu who live in eastern Quebec and Labrador, said the protest was being held because the Indians did not believe Cabot actually discovered anything. "When Cabot 'discovered' New-

foundland all he had to do was plant a flag and say 'This is crown land'. But there were people here already: the Indian people across Canada. The indigenous people have died from cholera, smallpox and starvation and yet ... Newfoundland wants to celebrate that. We feel there is nothing to celebrate."

Ms Rich said continued use of Goose Bay base by the RAF and other air forces was causing great damage. "The elders say there is a change in the migration routes of the caribou and to the conditions of the animals ... The Newfoundland government wants countries to practise low-level flying in our territory but we have never been asked if we would allow them to do that." The RAF makes around 1,000 sorties a year from Goose Bay and regards it as an important facility.

The Indian protests will disappoint the Duke of Edinburgh, who has taken a close interest in the *Matthew's* progress across the Atlantic.

"I wish her master and crew God-speed and a safe passage," he said as it left Bristol.

When Cabot arrived in Newfoundland, the Innu were already a thriving trading people, who lived in teepees and hunted with bows and arrows. Attempts to assimilate them into European society, first by missionaries and later by federal governments, proved disastrous.

Richard Garside, of the Survival International organisation, said: "The colonisation of their land has left them with a society and culture on the verge of total collapse. Alcoholism and abuse are rife and they have perhaps the worst suicide rate in North America."

Despite the Innu protests, the *Matthew's* 18-strong crew of experienced sailors will receive a rapturous reception from other well-wishers, with 130 ships expected to join the vessel as it sails into the harbour at Bonaville, on the east coast of Newfoundland.

Cabot was the first European recorded to set foot in North America, arriving in 1497, five years after Columbus reached the Caribbean. To mark the occasion, the *Matthew's* crew are expected to don calico shirts, padded waistcoats and caps for the last leg of their voyage. At least one crew-member, however, is aware of the Innu concerns. He has agreed to carry a message of sympathy to the Indians from supporters in the West Country. One of its authors, Mary Hazelwood, of the Bristol-based group Our Common Future, said Indian cultures taught the West valuable lessons about sustainable lifestyles. The letter ends: "We cannot redress the wrongs of the past but we can try to bring about a better future for those that have given so much of value to us."



Hot reception: Indians say there is little to celebrate, as the 'discovery' led to nothing but misery. Photograph: Peter Sibbald

Charles Kray gets 12 years for drug plot

Kim Sengupta and James Mellor

At the end, there were a lot of tears, jeers, and a few sets of cauliflower ears. The fan club was there yesterday to see 70-year-old Charles Kray, the grand old man of the London underworld, sent off to jail for 12 years for masterminding a £39m cocaine plot.

Kray, of Sanderstead in south London, was arrested after falling for a police sting in which he had offered to supply massive amounts of the drug to undercover officers. The proposed transaction had been secretly taped.

Before being led down to the cells, Kray once again protested his innocence. He said: "All my life I have advised people, particularly young people, never to be involved in drugs. I swear on my son's life I have never handled drugs in my life. The juries have got it wrong for me before

and this jury has got it wrong."

Friends and fellow villains fear the lengthy sentence means all three brothers of the gangland family could die behind bars. Ronnie died two years ago, while Reggie is said to be pessimistic of getting parole from his life sentence.

But Charles Kray's partner, Judy Stanley, is certain that he will survive incarceration. The 42-year-old daughter of a South London headmaster said outside Woolwich Crown Court, in south-east London: "We will appeal. It is absolutely right. There are no grounds for conviction or the entrapment. Twelve years is a long time, but Charlie will be fine. He will be very strong. He is a very strong man and he will deal with it. He just has to hold on for the next few months before the appeal."

Kray was unanimously convicted on two counts. He was found guilty of offering to supply five kilograms of high-pu-

riety cocaine every fortnight for two years, and also of actually supplying two kilograms of the drug. Over the period it would have netted Kray £8m.

Two of Kray's accomplices who had earlier pleaded guilty were also sentenced yesterday. Ronald Field, 50, of Raynes Park, south-west London, who admitted the two offences Kray denied received nine years.

Robert Gould, of Wimbledon, south London, who admitted supplying two kilograms of cocaine, was sentenced to five years.

In 1969, Kray was convicted of being an accessory to the murder of Jack "The Hat" McVitie. Since coming out of prison in 1974, the police believe he had been involved in constant villainy.

Over the years various law agencies had targeted him no less than a dozen times. This was, for Kray, the unlucky 13th.

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news

Abattoirs will be forced to ease suffering

John Harvey

Millions of chickens, turkeys and other animals going through UK abattoirs are to be protected from pain and distress under new laws.

For the first time, the Government intends to use legisla-

tion to ensure that animals ending up on dinner plates are stunned and killed correctly.

Until now, welfare in abattoirs has been based on codes of practice and from the Ministry of Agriculture. But in an interview with *The Independent*, Elliot Morley, the junior

agriculture minister, said he was determined that slaughtering should be carried out under the highest standards.

He will use proposals published by the European Commission last year to enact laws "which try to reduce the suffering and abuse exposed in

documentaries, newspaper articles and official reports".

Peter Stevenson, legal and political director of Compassion in World Farming, welcomed the move, but said there was still more the Government could do. More than 700 million birds and 35 million pigs, cattle and sheep

are killed each year in UK abattoirs. Before they are killed, they are supposed to be stunned to avoid any pain while they are bleeding to death. But ineffective stunning can mean animals regain consciousness before they die. This may be because the electrical stun in too

short, there is too long a time gap between stunning and throat cutting, or the wrong blood vessels are cut.

Mr Morley's new legislation will mean that, for the first time, minimum electrical currents have to be used for stunning, and both carotid arteries have

to be cut, ensuring a rapid death. "Some sections of the poultry industry only cut one artery, and there have been welfare concerns about that," said Mr Morley. "It is important that both carotid arteries are cut after stunning."

Peter Scott, General Secretary of the Federation of Fresh Meat Wholesalers - representing red meat abattoirs - said his members would support a new law concerning electric stun currents and cutting both carotid vessels. "Where we might have reservations is in the setting of currents which could be required of us."

Evidence suggests that the issue of stun currents needs to be tackled. For example, research by Bristol University scientists suggests that more than 50 per cent of turkeys suffer from painful electric shocks before they are stunned. In 1993, a Ministry of Agriculture abattoir survey found pigs being stunned with the wrong current and recovering from the stun before they were killed.

About 20 per cent - or 2.5 million animals - are suffocated with carbon dioxide each year, which scientists have found can cause distress. Mr Morley said he will look at alternatives to this.

Another approach which Mr Morley wants to look at is the use of fail-safe devices. These automatically stop the stun if the electrical resistance of an individual animal - because of unusually thick fur for example - means insufficient electrical current is being delivered. "It is now five years since it became

Beefing up the law: The legislation governing the slaughter of cattle, pigs, sheep and poultry is to be revised, to cut suffering

The killing field

- There are 488 abattoirs in Great Britain.
- More than 700 million birds and 35 million pigs, cattle and sheep are killed each year in UK abattoirs.
- More than 50 per cent of turkeys suffer from painful electric shocks before they are stunned.
- The industry is a major employer. In 1994 more than 110,000 people were directly involved and, despite the recent BSE crisis, the industry still employs almost 100,000.
- Various methods are used to stun animals prior to death, including electric shocks and gas chambers.



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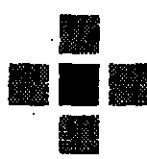
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Gotham City comes to Battersea as Batman and his foes fly into town

The Caped Crusader and Robin are back.

Paul McCann reports on the hype for their new movie

A mountain of hype was used to support Britain's biggest and most expensive movie premiere last night when *Batman and Robin* opened at nine screens in London's West End and at 19 cinemas across the country.

A massive party thrown inside Battersea Power Station which was converted into Gotham City for the night, complete with a "Wayne Manor". So large has been the pre-release marketing effort by the film's makers, Warner Brothers, that some movie industry insiders wonder if it isn't a tactic to swamp poor reviews because the film is a turkey.

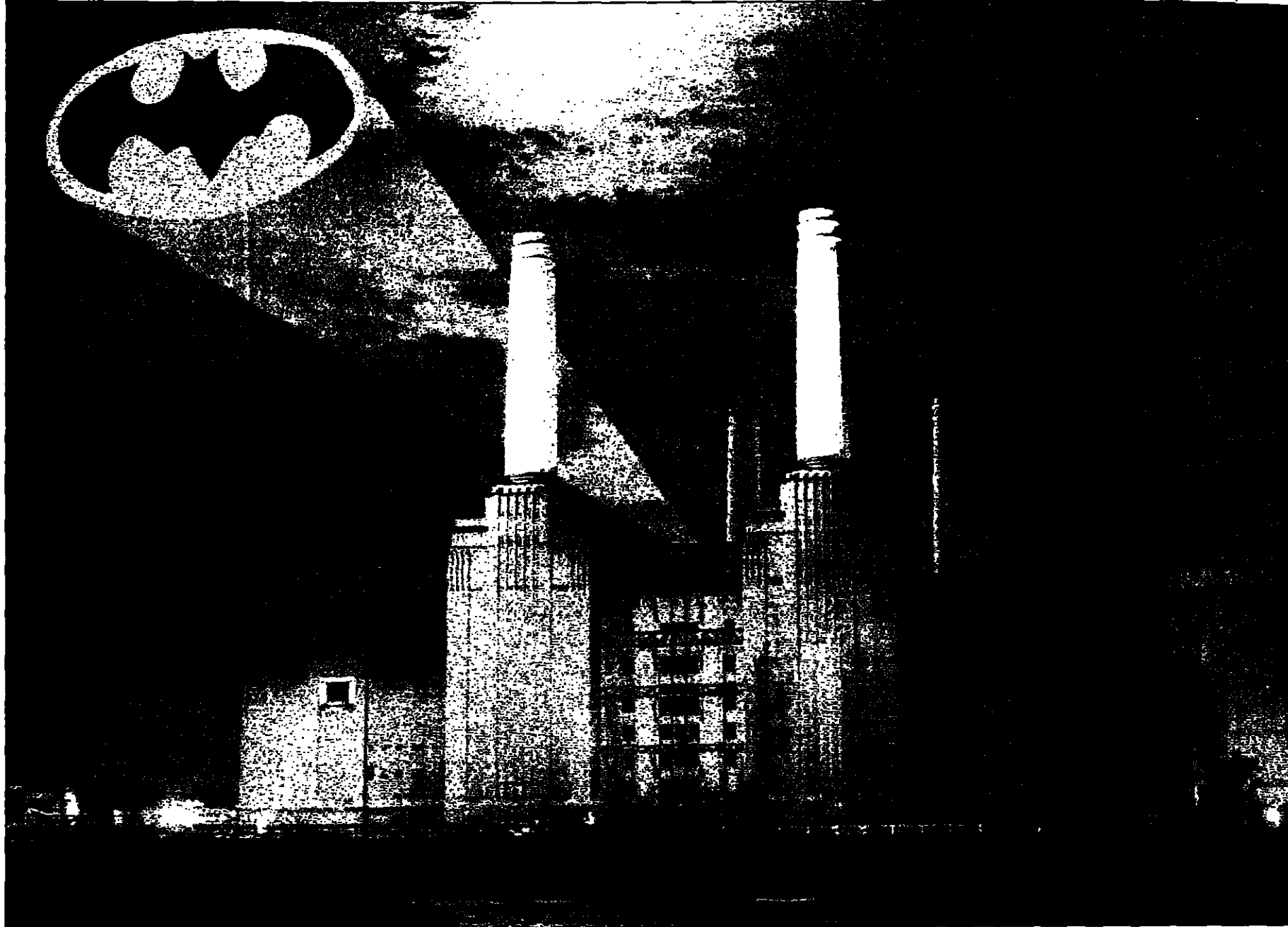
Batman and Robin, which cost more than \$100m (£75m) to make, is the fourth in the current series of Batman films and the second to be directed by Joel Schumacher. It goes on general release in the United Kingdom from Friday.

It opened in America last Friday to limp reviews, but Warner Brothers secured distribution in a huge network of cinemas and it took \$43.6m (£27m) at the box office in the first weekend. That was only just down on the \$52.8m first weekend take of the last Batman film, *Batman Forever* – but well down on the \$90m taken by Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* sequel, *The Lost World*, in its first four days earlier this summer.

The premiere in Britain will be followed by similar process in at least half a dozen countries across Europe over the next month as the film's stars tour the Continent giving interviews and appearing at premieres.

"Gone are the days when you waited a year for a blockbuster to make its way from the US to the rest of the world," said Boyd Farrow, editor of the film industry bible, *Screen International*. "Now there is so much competition to have the summer blockbuster that they need to capitalise immediately on the hype of the first opening weekend in America."

The film here is also helping to publicise the opening of Warner Brothers' latest cinema complex – a 32-screen behemoth in Battersea.



Holy smokes: The caped crusader appears over Battersea power station, which is to be transformed into a 32-screen cinema complex Photograph: Mykel Nicolau

The premiere was attended by three of the film's four stars, Uma Thurman, Arnold Schwarzenegger and *ER* star George Clooney.

Industry cynics claim that the stars were brought together for an unusual recording of *Oprah* in America last week to help publicise the film's release there.

"I think they must be worried

about what word-of-mouth reaction will do to it," says one industry source who wishes to remain anonymous. "It is a classic tactic you hype the film to the heavens, get it into as many screens as possible on its first weekend and that way you get as many people as possible in to see the film before the fact that it is a turkey gets around."

Mr Schumacher has already been forced to deny strong rumours in the American press that the film had to be extensively re-shot after poor audience reactions to test screenings. He is thought to have spent extra time in the editing suite removing what has been described as the more "camp" aspects of the film.

"Well there is certainly plenty of

camp left in it," says *The Independent's* columnist John Lytle who saw the film's press preview.

"The thing looks like it has been set in a gay nightclub in the Seventies. It is more like the Sixties TV series than the previous 'Dark Avenger' films – only the TV series was better at camping it up."

"People at the preview were howl-

ing at all the wrong places and at the end the Warner's publicity people looked shocked."

However, Boyd Farrow believes the release strategy is standard for such a big-budget film. "It may not be a masterpiece, but it is a good summer movie. And it has to fight off the competition from *The Lost World* and *Men In Black*."

Pointy-eared roll of honour

Batman (1943) Columbia
Starring: Lewis Wilson as Batman and Douglas Croft as Robin.

Verdict by Halliwell's film "bible": A 15-episode Saturday morning serial where the caped crusader takes on a Dr Daka. "A reasonably spirited romp marred by tinpot sets."

Batman and Robin (1948) Columbia
Starring: Robert Lowery and John Duncan.
Halliwell's verdict: It takes 15 episodes to combat someone called The Wizard.

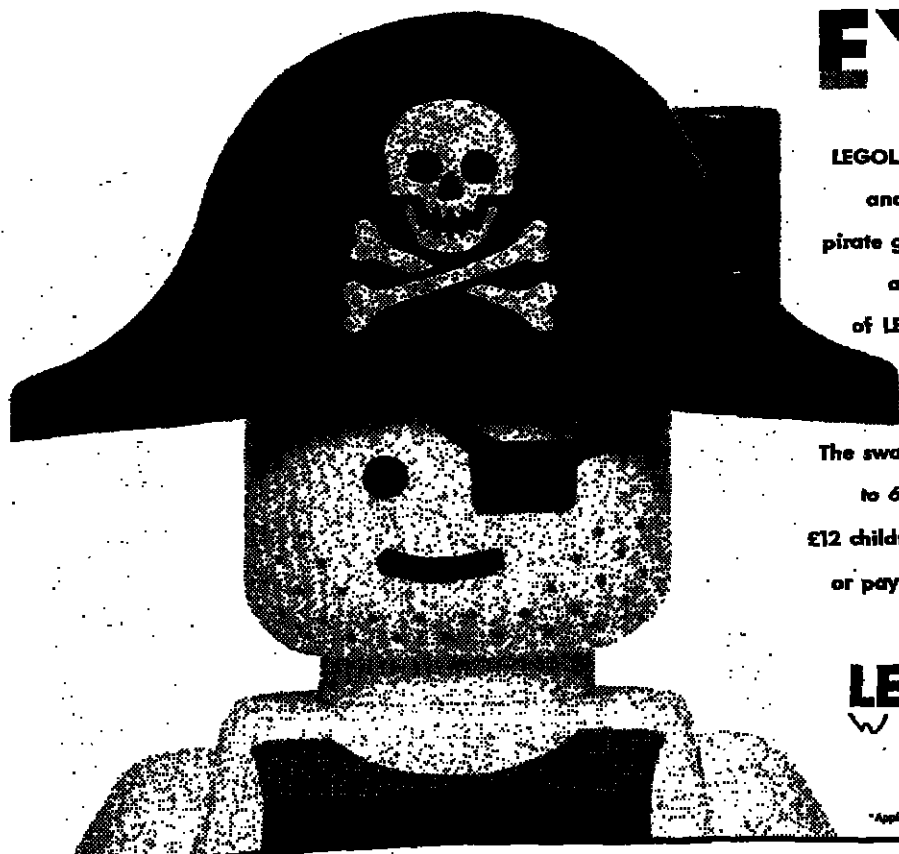
Batman (1966) NIP Publications
Starring: Adam West in camp pants and decidedly non-macho Burt Ward.
Halliwell's verdict: Glossy feature version of TV serials. "The result is more childish than camp."

Batman (1989) Warner Bros
Starring: Michael Keaton as Batman, Jack Nicholson as The Joker and Kim Basinger as implausible be-spectacled reporter.
Halliwell's verdict: "The campiness of earlier versions gives way to a gloomier psychological interpretation." First weekend US takings: \$40.5m.

Batman Returns (1992) Warner Bros
Starring: Michael Keaton as the depressed batbloke, Danny DeVito as The Penguin and Michelle Pfeiffer in the best costume so far as Catwoman.
Halliwell's verdict: A blacker, spikier, but less focused version of a Disney animation feature. First weekend US takings: \$45.7m.

Batman Forever (1995) Warner Bros
Starring: Val Kilmer, Chris O'Donnell briefly as Robin and Jim Carrey as The Riddler.
Halliwell's verdict: Not available. First weekend US takings: \$52.8m.

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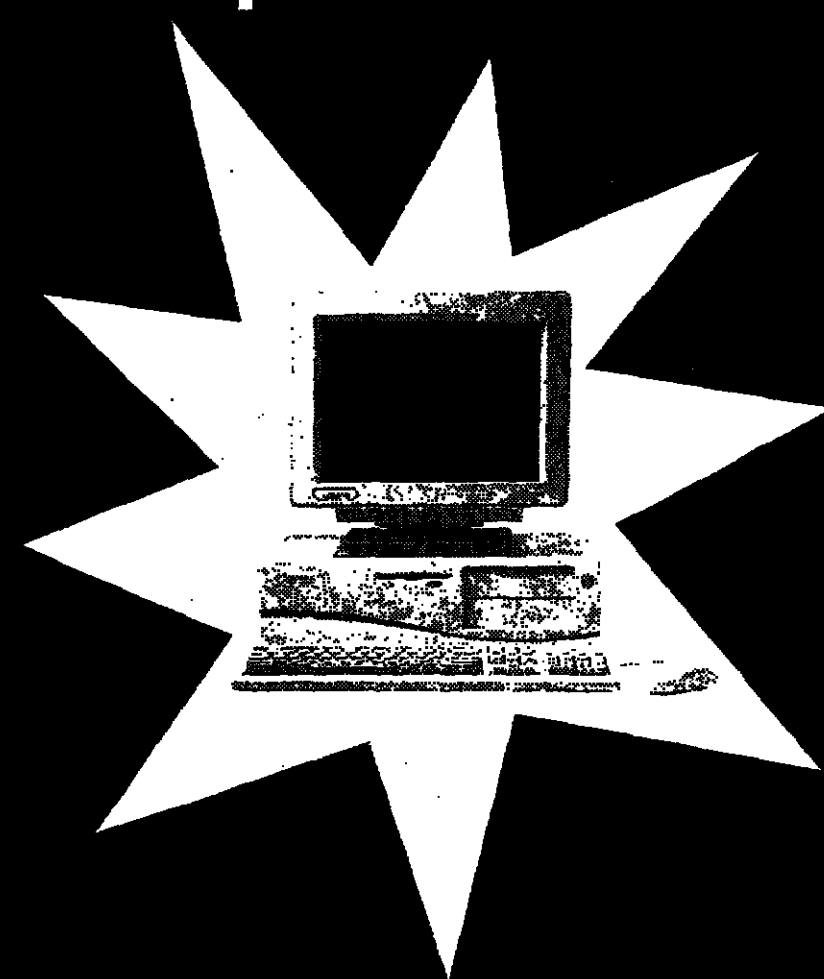
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Hong Kong handover



Showing the flag: The Royal Yacht Britannia sailing into Victoria Bay yesterday for the final days of British rule in Hong Kong. The ship is to serve as the temporary home for the Prince of Wales during the handover festivities, when he will formally hand back the territory to the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin
Photograph: David Rose

Britain yields on Chinese troops

Steve Crawshaw
Hong Kong

Britain backed down yesterday after a series of arguments with Peking about soldiers of the People's Liberation Army coming into Hong Kong before the handover. More than 500 troops will arrive at 9pm on Monday night, three hours before the Union Flag is hauled down.

Britain had already reluctantly agreed to allow just under 200 unarmed PLA soldiers into the territory in the last few weeks before Hong Kong returns to China. But yesterday's agreement went much further.

The 509 additional Chinese mainland troops - almost tripling the numbers - will be allowed to carry rifles and sidearms. There is enormous sensitivity on both sides about the Chinese entitlement (or lack of it) to carry weapons. Reuters new agency reported that early yesterday PLA troops earlier visited a Bank of China building in Hong Kong and after emerging with a stack of metal boxes about the right size to contain weapons, manhandled an American news photographer who happened to be at the scene. The photographer, working on the handover for the Far Eastern Economic Review magazine, said a PLA officer pounced on him when he raised his camera to shoot the mysterious operation.

Once the deal on the PLA presence had been done, British officials were keen to put a brave face on it, saying the presence of the soldiers before midnight was "central to Chinese perceptions of the restoration of sovereignty". Britain hoped the troops would behave "in a way we would regard as acceptable". The official reason given for the armed troops' early arrival was to allow the PLA "to perform its duties from Zero Hour on 1 July".

The 509 soldiers will arrive in 39 vehicles and will be posted at four points in the territory, including the Prince of Wales barracks, close to where the

handover ceremony will take place. China is apparently nervous that government leaders - including the president, Jiang Zemin, and the Prime Minister, Li Peng - might be vulnerable to protesters during their brief stay of a few hours in Hong Kong before they are whisked back to the mainland. The visit has been designed with a view to ensuring that Chinese leaders they do not come into contact with potential protesters.

As D-Day approaches, there is less and less effort to send out signals which might reassure the Hong Kong democrats or the rest of the world that tolerance will be the new watchword. Yesterday, the future justice secretary, Elsie Cheung, emphasised: "If [the Democratic Party] do anything which violates the law, they will be subject to prosecution." The new chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, made clear on Sunday that all laws passed by the incoming, Peking-approved legislature would be backdated to midnight, which would enable Peking's critics in the existing legislative council to be prosecuted for their actions immediately after the handover.

The worst-case scenario would theoretically allow Chinese weapons to be turned on protesters, if the authorities deem them to have acted illegally. It is generally assumed that Peking would not wish to enter the new era with quite such a bang, however much it would like to see its critics silenced.

Hong Kong's elected legislative council, which will be replaced by a council more sympathetic to Peking, yesterday began its final session, discussing a raft of routine legislation. Up for discussion was everything from a Western Harbour Crossing By-Law to a Dogs and Cats (Amendment) Bill. The rituals continued to be played out as if in the House of Commons, including a formal bow of the head, when members entered the chamber. There was little acknowledgement that an era is about to end.

The World of Lily Wong



Peking steps up executions in war against drugs trade

Teresa Poole
Peking

Just over 150 years since China lost the Opium War, the country is again fighting a losing battle against drugs. A national crackdown has been implemented in the run-up to the return of Hong Kong, resulting in a surge of death sentences as the authorities attempt to curb smuggling and drug use. At least 100 executions of drug offenders have taken place in the past one week alone, after large public sentencing rallies around the country.

This month, anti-narcotics officials symbolically burned 150kg of heroin and amphetamines in Hunan county, south China, the site where in 1839 Commissioner Lin Zhen infuriated the British opium traders

by destroying 20,000 chests of opium. But the propaganda stunt was an embarrassing reminder that drugs, a problem that was virtually eliminated after the Communist victory in 1949, have returned with a vengeance in the era of reform.

The scale of the problem is difficult to assess. At the end of 1995, China admitted to 530,000 registered drug addicts, but even the official media admits the real number is much higher. Earlier this year, Chinese officials privately told the visiting Russian Procurator-General, Rigory Skuratov, that the country had 12 million drug addicts, although at 1 per cent of the total population, this may have been an exaggeration.

There is no exaggerating, however, the ferocity of China's response. In the past six years,

65,000 dealers and traffickers have been arrested for drug-related crimes and hundreds of thousands of addicts despatched to rehabilitation units. During that period China seized more than 21.5 tonnes of heroin, 12.6 tonnes of opium and 8.5 tonnes of marijuana.

Last Thursday, a public rally was held at the Shijingshan Stadium in Peking, where drugs were burned and 14 drug-dealers and traffickers were sentenced to death. They were then driven off in a truck for immediate execution. Similar mass executions took place across the country - 15 in Fujian province, 24 in Sichuan, 15 in Guangzhou, and five in Zhuhai. In Kunming, capital of Yunnan province, which borders South-East Asia's prime drug-producer, Burma, 27 people were

executed and 1,000kg of heroin were burned.

Until the past few years, China's drugs problem was mostly confined to Yunnan, but drug use has now spread across the whole country. Between 1992 and 1996, Peking saw a 24-fold increase in drug-related criminal cases, said the Peking Youth daily this month. The addicts were overwhelmingly males under 35 years old, unemployed, with less than senior high school education levels.

A national drug hotline has been set up for people to report drug dealers and for addicts to get help. One man said: "All my neighbours smuggle drugs because farming cannot bring them enough money. In the past, the surrounding villages were very poor, but now almost all families get suddenly rich."

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Troops left in limbo over role on Rhine

Imre Karacs
Rheindahlen

Britain's new Secretary of state for Defence inspected his troops on the Rhine yesterday, but left them guessing about their future in Germany.

After a flying visit to the Rheindahlen base, which also serves as the headquarters of Nato's Rapid Reaction Corps, George Robertson indicated that pulling British troops out of Germany was one of the options being considered by the current defence review. "No decision has been taken," he said.

The British presence has already been halved since its peak of 59,000 at the end of the Cold War and is set to stabilise at a force of 23,000 soldiers by 2002.

By then the RAF will have flown back to Britain. The last Chinook helicopters left RAF Laarbruch yesterday.

Mr Robertson said that all aspects of defence would be examined, including the bases abroad. "I am determined to build a consensus across the

political divide in Britain, in order to ensure that defence ceases to be a political football," he said.

Commanders in Germany had hoped that after the cuts which they have suffered in recent years, their units would be spared further upheavals - sentiments with which Mr Robertson appeared to concur. "We have political and military reasons for staying here," Mr Robertson told a German newspaper before his visit.

But yesterday he also suggested that there might also be perfectly good reasons for withdrawal. "There would be long-term savings," he told *The Independent*.

The economic arguments are complex. According to military planners, Britain simply does not have the facilities at home to cope with an army of its current size. "For anything above a force of 75,000, we need Germany," said Lt-Gen Michael Jackson, the British commander of Nato's Rapid Reaction Corps.

The problem is that there are not enough barracks and train-



Which way now? A soldier on manoeuvres in a Challenger tank. British troops in Germany are facing an uncertain future

Photograph: Bob Morrison

slightly more difficult to articulate, because Western politicians are obliged to turn a blind eye in public to the continued Russian threat.

Thus, the political reasons are coded. The British presence in Germany is meant to "signal our solidarity with the Central European nations," Mr Robertson said. Solidarity against who? - Don't ask.

Finally, Britain feels obliged to keep troops on the Continent so as to project her power and preserve her role as Nato's top dog in Europe.

The British presence is therefore portrayed as an "expression of our commitment to Nato", even though that commitment has never been raised in the history of the Alliance.

ing grounds at home, whereas "facilities already exist in Germany on an extremely good deal from the [German] government," Lt-Gen Jackson adds. "Much of the land is provid-

ed by Germany free of charge, and the infrastructure is already in place. Without the German bases, the British government would have to spend enormous sums on new bar-

racks at home and cut back the forces savagely at the same time.

There are also strong logistical arguments for keeping troops in Germany. Even if

Russia is no longer as big a threat as it once was, British forces are more likely to be required in the future on this side of the English Channel.

And, as the crisis in Bosnia

has demonstrated, the German bridgehead continues to play a useful role. Or, as Lt-Gen Jackson puts it, "this is still a very good place to deploy from".

The political justification is

Japan's war victims never say die in bid for reparation



Unfinished business: Mr Titherington (left) with Hendrik Zeeman, a former Dutch intern, in Tokyo yesterday

Richard Lloyd Parry
Tokyo

Two years ago," says Arthur Titherington, "I went to a fortune-teller, and d'you know what she predicted? She said that I'm going to live until I'm 93. Whatever happens, you see, they're got another 20 years of me. The Japanese government is sitting back and waiting for the natural solution, by which they mean the deaths of people like me. But they are mistaken. This case will not go away."

Mr Titherington, chairman of the Japanese Labour Camp Survivors' Association, is 75, looks 58, and seems entirely likely to be around in 2015. By that time his wartime experiences in a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp in Taiwan will be 70 years in the past. But judging from his form yesterday, at a press conference in the Tokyo

plaintiffs insist this applied only to government-to-government claims and that as individuals they are entitled to individual compensation.

Yesterday Frits Kalshoven, professor of international law at Leiden University, appeared as an expert witness to support this contention. "Professor Kalshoven was effectively saying the Japanese government is living in the past," Martyn Day, the plaintiffs' British lawyer, said afterwards. "And not just the recent past: the arguments they're putting forward haven't been common currency since before the war. It's a devastating blow for the Japanese government and I urge them to pay these people what they are due, and spare them the torture of continuing these claims."

The problem is that if the Japanese are behind the times, so are the British, Australian and New Zealand governments. When the former foreign secretary Malcolm Rifkind came to Tokyo in September he reminded his counterpart of the "strong feelings" the subject arouses in Britain, but agreed the matter was legally closed. Governmental assurances that they sympathise with the former prisoners have not been backed up by concrete diplomatic suggestions. In the past, British officials privately expressed the belief that the action is motivated by greed and revenge, and admitted privately that were also waiting for the "natural solution".

Mr Titherington and Mr Day say they detect a change of tone at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

But it would be a remarkable government, even a Labour government, which jeopardised good relations with Japan over this issue.

"This is nothing to do with hatred," says Mr Titherington. "It is not about revenge. It is about justice. I surrendered once to Japan. I won't surrender again."

'Pay these people and spare them the torture of continuing these claims'

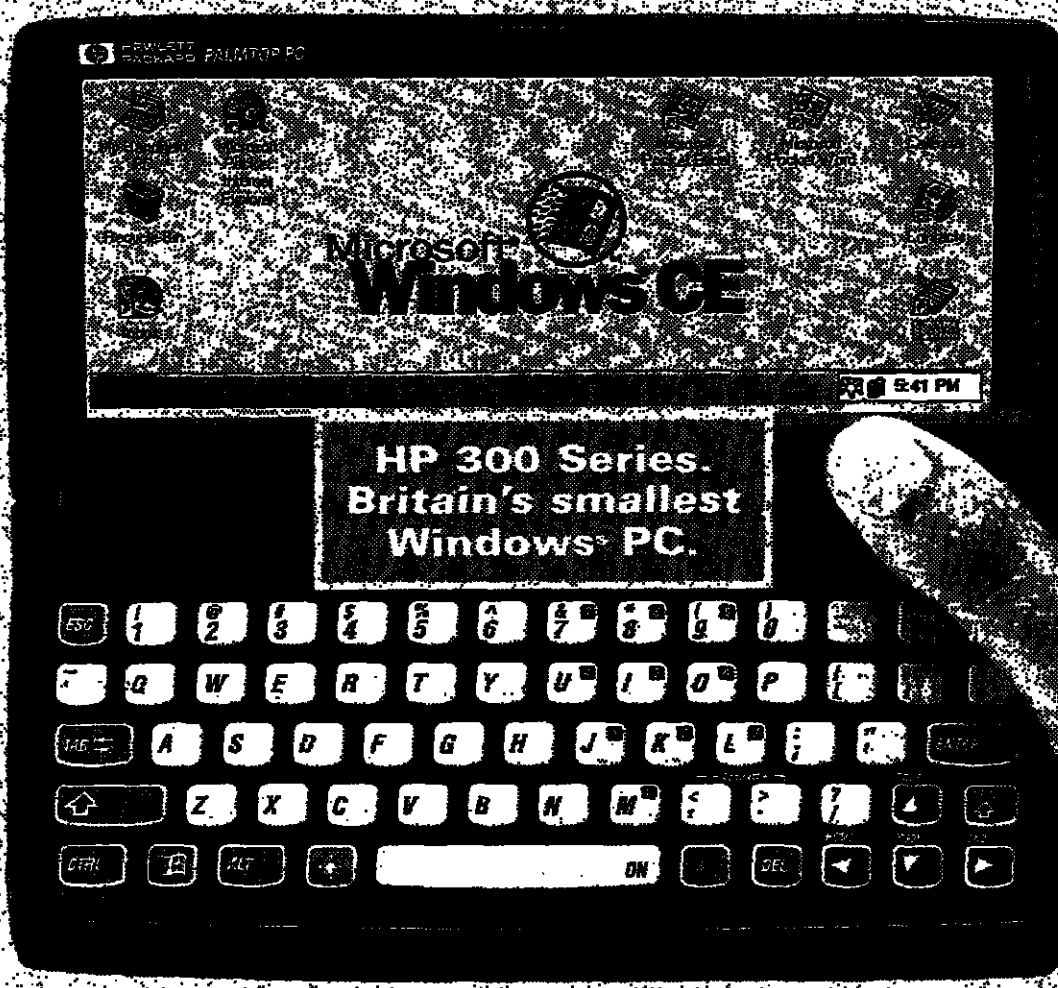
District Court, the passing of the years will have changed little.

He was in Tokyo yesterday for the latest episode in a case that began two-and-a-half years ago, and is unlikely to wrap up before spring. Five former captives, including an Australian, a New Zealander, an American, and a British woman held as a child slave in a civilian camp, are suing the Japanese government for \$22,000 (£13,750) on behalf of 40,000 fellow detainees around the world.

The Japanese government has always insisted the issue of compensation was settled by the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty, which exempted it from further war reparations. The



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Capitalism and the Atlantic divide



Losers: In the US, the world's richest nation, unemployment can bring financial ruin

Photograph: Herbie Knott

Mary Dejevsky
Washington

When US officials decided to trumpet America's economic dynamism as a model for the rest of mankind before the weekend economic summit of world leaders in Denver, they may not have anticipated the results. What ensued was one of the first skirmishes in what could become a very long and bloody campaign.

To the Americans' evident surprise, the "Europeans" — with the French and Germans in the vanguard, but the Canadians and British not far behind — set out to defend themselves, and the result was a far more even contest than the Americans could have forecast.

Once upon a time, things were simpler. When there was a straight competition between communism and capitalism, the Group of Seven industrialised countries waged the war for capitalism. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, communism surrendered and the free market ruled supreme, or so it seemed.

Americans disdain the European view that the state has a role in the welfare of its citizens

Russia came to Denver as an almost full participant and is now described as having a democratic free market economy.

In the time that it has taken for Russia to switch from a failed communist model to an unruly capitalist one, however, new arguments have broken out about how free a free market should be and what role the State should play in a capitalist economy. At Denver, because of what the Europeans saw as US "triumphalism", they came to a head.

The US gave the impression that it was only a matter of time before the Europeans realised the superiority of the "American model" and changed their economic policies accordingly. The Europeans bridled: a French government that had timidly hinted at following such a model had been drummed out of office. Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany was in polit-

ical trouble for supporting cuts in the social state. Thatcherism had brought elements of the American model to Britain and contributed to an economic boom, but the social effects helped to bring Labour to power on a landslide.

As US President Bill Clinton was forced by Sunday to recognise, cultural differences and national mindsets cannot be discounted. No European democracy would vote for an American model, which is seen as harsh, arbitrary and unsophisticated.

For Americans, even leftist Democrats like Mr Clinton, there are certain self-evident economic truths. These include the primacy of competition, the rule of the free market, as small as possible a role for government, low personal and business taxation and "flexibility" in the labour market, by which is meant the right for employers

to hire and fire with few explanations needed. The onus is on individuals to do the best for themselves and their families.

The labour force is highly mobile — it has to be. Savings are high — they have to be. If you are sacked, you can lose your health insurance, and the safety net is a long way further down than in most European countries. But the fruits of success are correspondingly high.

Of course, there is not one European model, but there are certain assumptions that even Britons — post-Thatcher, the most "American" of Europeans — adhere to. They include a universal right to decent standards of health care and welfare (not just the absolute minimum), decent housing and working conditions that rise across the board as the economy grows, and a feeling that no one group should lag too far behind the rest.

To many Americans, Euro-

significant shorts

Hillary loses tussle over Whitewater notes

Hillary Clinton yesterday lost her legal battle to keep notes of conversations with her lawyer about the Whitewater land deal confidential. Mrs Clinton had fought the case right up to the Supreme Court, arguing that the notes were subject to lawyer-client privilege and should not be turned over to the special prosecutor investigating the case. The prosecutor had argued that the notes, taken by White House lawyers, were public property and not subject to lawyer-client confidentiality. The case, which could have serious implications for the Clintons, highlighted the legal ambiguities in investigations that involve an incumbent president or his family.

Mary Dejevsky — Washington

Vietnamese sages fade away

Vietnam's three ageing top leaders are leaving office in a peaceful but possibly dramatic shake-up. Vo Van Kiet, the Prime Minister, who is 74, President Le Duc Anh, 76, and the secretary of the Communist Party, Do Muoi, 80, have not appeared on a list of candidates for coming elections to the National Assembly, indicating their effective removal from politics. Officially, they turned down pleas to stay for another term, citing old age. Analysts believe there is pressure on Vietnam's elderly 12-member politburo, especially from the military, to become more energetic and go further with radical economic liberalisation laws. Earlier this year President Anh reportedly raised tension within the party by delivering a speech in which he castigated individualism and reform.

Matthew Chance

Old foes on the peace path

India and Pakistan, seeking to end 50 years of hostility, announced an agenda for talks that includes the Kashmir dispute. A statement issued after talks between the Indian and Pakistani foreign-ministry secretaries said the two sides had agreed to set up working groups to tackle all issues dividing them. They agreed to halt propaganda and avoid provocative actions. Topping the agenda was "peace and security, including confidence-building measures", with Jammu and Kashmir second. They agreed to discuss their confrontation on the Siachen glacier, terrorism and drug-trafficking, economic and commercial co-operation, and other issues.

Reuters — Islamabad

Muslim wives fight divorce law

For centuries Muslim men have repeated the Arabic word for divorce three times legally to leave their wives. But an association called Nisha, or Women, was formed last week in the southern state of Kerala to petition the government to ban the custom of allowing men to divorce their wives by saying, "Talaq, talaq, talaq." Arabic for divorce, Nisha has reportedly urged the Indian government to insist that all Islamic marriages be registered in a court rather than in a cleric's register only.

AP — New Delhi

MPs thwart spending cuts

Russia's opposition-dominated lower house of parliament rejected a government Bill to slash spending under the 1997 budget. The State Duma also rejected by 195 to 137 votes a plan put forward by deputies themselves that would have cut spending by less than the 108 trillion roubles (£11.75bn), or about a fifth of the budget, which the government was hoping for.

Reuters — Moscow

French stitch up Lagerfeld



A Nice court slapped a huge tax bill on the fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld (pictured), concluding he evaded taxes 1982-84. Sources said the court ordered him to pay 18m francs (£1.9m) after rejecting his argument that he lived in Monaco, whose residents are exempt from income tax. Lagerfeld is chief designer for Chanel, the Italian firm Fendi and his own signature line. His

lawyer had argued he was a German national living in Monaco and therefore not subject to French taxation.

Reuters — Nice

US seeks Pol Pot extradition

The US has asked Canada to help extradite the Khmer Rouge chief, Pol Pot, from Cambodia so he can be tried by an international tribunal for crimes against humanity. At the recent summit of the eight main industrialised nations, Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, asked her Canadian counterpart, Lloyd Axworthy, to request the extradition. Only Canada and Denmark have laws letting them make such a request.

Reuters — Washington

Mummy Russia

Russian MPs urged citizens and the authorities to oppose burying Lenin's mummified body. The State Duma branded attempts to remove the body from its Red Square mausoleum "an act of political revenge" that would ruin the square's historical ties.

Reuters — Moscow



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divide

rich nations of the West

peans look mollycoddled by the State. French lorry drivers striking for retirement at 55, higher pensions and longer holidays have become a paradigm for a European weakness. What many Americans ignore, however, is the economic - as well as social - cost of their way of life.

Standards of education and healthcare diverge widely between rich and poor, black and white. Insurance to provide security is expensive and selective. Even the comfortably off can face financial ruin through unemployment, illness or the birth of a handicapped child.

Many US cities are effectively - and increasingly - segregated, as the better off move to avoid paying local taxes for welfare services and public housing they think they will never use. The result is bankrupt inner cities with decaying infrastructure, but a tax base that cannot include the wealthy (and low-taxed) suburbs.

In almost every US city there are pockets of deprivation worse than many of the worst housing estates in western Eu-

rope. It is only recently that US politicians have started to point out the threat to the safe and wealthy from such disparity.

Even the operation of the US free market is not as free as many Americans believe. Regulations are extensive; but not always observed. There is competition, but it does not necessarily work in the interests of consumers.

And calculations of economic indicators may be different. The US boasts of its productivity: by which it means per member of its working-age population. But productivity as measured in much of Europe (per worker in a job) is higher and has increased faster than in the US; that is a side-effect of higher employment costs, and a factor in European joblessness.

It is sometimes said that the biggest difference is one of attitude: that the Americans live to work and the Europeans work to live. If nothing else, the skirmish at Denver has started a debate that will consider not only on what works statistically, but on what people want.



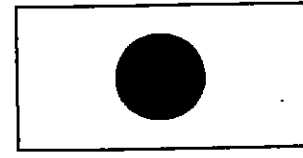
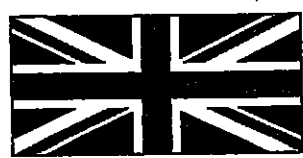
Fighters: French lorry drivers demand earlier retirement from the 'mollycoddling' State

Photograph: Reuters

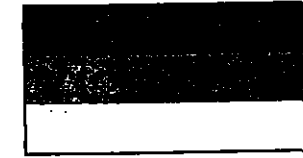
How the Big 8 compare

BRITAIN
TRADE: Britain has been committed to free trade since the repeal of the Corn Laws last century. Labour and the Tories agree, and both argue for a single market in Europe.
THE STATE: Prime Minister Thatcher tried to push back the boundaries of the state; Tony Blair looks as if he will continue that heritage. He has talked about redefining the tasks of government - not going back to state ownership or state intervention.
INFLATION: Became a real problem in the Seventies; but since then, fighting inflation has taken priority. Labour has handed control of monetary policy to an independent central bank.
LABOUR: The power of the unions was largely broken during the 1980s; and Blair is not giving them much more room for manoeuvre. Like the Conservatives, Labour argues for a "flexible" workforce.

JAPAN
TRADE: In the late 1980s Japan's perennial trade surplus, particularly with the US, became a serious obstacle to diplomatic relations with its allies. The yen's appreciation over the last three years has eased the situation somewhat. The government's enthusiasm for exports, combined with a web of impenetrable "non-tariff barriers", ensures a steady stream of complaints about everything from cars to insurance policies.
THE STATE: Nominally a free market, Japan is characterised by the "iron triangle" of business, politicians and the bureaucracy. Companies look to the powerful trade and finance ministries for so-called "administrative guidance".
INFLATION: Japan's inflation was close to zero last year.
LABOUR: Unions conduct a noisy, but ritualistic, "spring wage offensive" once a year. Since a brief spasm in the late 1960s, Japan's unions have done little to rock the economic boat.



GERMANY
TRADE: As an export-driven economy, Germany is a passionate advocate of free trade, though it has been slow to open its own market to foreign competition.
THE STATE: Main function is to police the "social market economy" and keep the forces of unbridled capitalism in check. Much lip-service is now being paid to need for loosening state's grip, but with little evident effect.
INFLATION: Viewed as a natural calamity on the scale of the Black Death. Rarely been allowed to go significantly above zero in the last 50 years.
LABOUR: Unions have a legal role in the running of Germany Inc, but it is weakening as traditional industries contract. Like the state, they are powerful dampeners on change.



FRANCE
TRADE: There is an instinctive French recoil from the concept of free trade, which is sometimes portrayed as a threat to the French way of life. But why? France is one of the most successful traders on the planet, with a trade surplus of £13.5 bn last year.
THE STATE: One in four French people work for it; over 52 per cent of GNP is consumed by it. There is a grudging feeling, even on the Left, that the state should be smaller but a horror of the state-shrinking route.
INFLATION: This is not a popular French obsession; unlike say Britain or Germany.
LABOUR: Unions are shrinking but surprisingly powerful. The overwhelming proportion of French workers no longer belong to Unions but most people tend to support union battles to protect acquired rights and privileges.



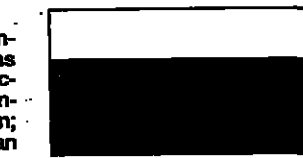
ITALY
TRADE: In the main, an advocate of free trade, Italy imposes its own form of protectionism in its citizens' overwhelming tendency to buy home-made products.
THE STATE: Though most Italians have an endearingly blind loyalty to their nation, there are few things about it that they would take to the barricades to defend.
INFLATION: Bringing inflation down from 4.5 per cent to 1.6 per cent in the space of just over a year, is one of Italy's major success stories. But the cautious Bank of Italy Governor, Antonio Fazio, is clearly not all that impressed.
UNIONS: Head-on collisions between Government and unions have become a thing of the past since consensus politics became all the rage in Italy.



AMERICA
TRADE: The United States favours free trade, but insists on a "level playing field" - which means it expects others to conform to US regulations worldwide. This makes negotiations difficult. Periodically flirts with managed trade.
THE STATE: In theory, there is as little role for the state as possible; in practice, much federal regulation, some of which is ignored, an unwieldy and expensive state health system, and (even post-Cold War) a huge military sector. America is a consumer economy, where consumer choice is almost a religious belief.
INFLATION: The US favours low inflation, and has recently managed to combine this with high growth; the Great Depression left scars, which means high employment is also an important goal.
LABOUR: The unions are tolerated, but weak, except in certain sectors (hailage, public transport) and enjoy little public esteem.



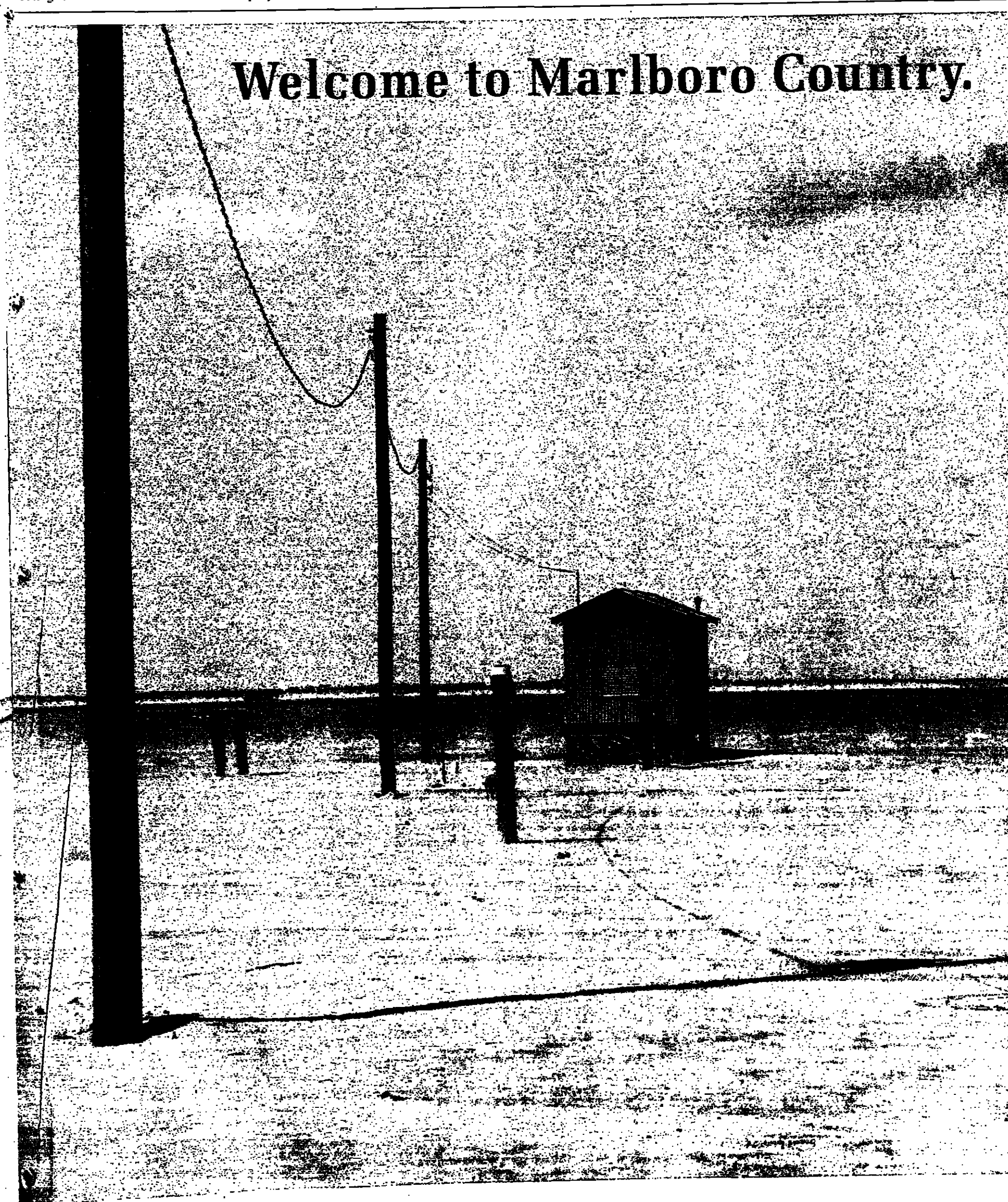
RUSSIA
TRADE: Russia's dependency on imports means that it cannot be too protectionist. Certain domestic industries are an exception; duties on foreign cars can double the list price.
THE STATE: Although some 60 per cent of the economy is privatised, the government still hasn't kicked the habits of Soviet central planning. One reason small business hasn't taken off in Russia is because of meddling from government. An addition to red tape and corruption doesn't help.
INFLATION: No one wants a repeat of 1992 when annual inflation ran at 2,500 per cent. It's now down to one per cent a month.
The government believes low inflation is critical to investor confidence; any deviation is likely to lead to a carping from its lenders at the IMF.
LABOUR: Unions are pretty feeble. They were government stooges under Communism, and they have yet to find a post-Soviet role. Russians still widely distrust them.



CANADA
TRADE: Canada is one of the most open of the Western industrialized economies. It actively pursued a Free Trade agreement with the United States which grew into NAFTA, but still tries to protect its cultural industries.
THE STATE: By the time of the Golden Years in the 1970s, Canada boasted cradle-to-the-grave social security system and heavy state investment.
The current Liberal Government has scaled back social spending and has sold off most of the state corporations.
INFLATION: The 90s recession slew the inflation dragon and annual inflation is now in the 2 per cent range, even without restrictive monetary policy.
LABOUR: The percentage of unionised workers in the private sector has been dropping although the automobile sector and construction are still heavily unionised.



Welcome to Marlboro Country.



SMOKING CAUSES CANCER

Officers' Warning
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Marlboro Lights
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obituaries / gazette

Professor O. V. S. Heath

O. V. S. Heath was a biologist who made seminal contributions to our understanding of how plants grow and function. His influence did, however, extend far beyond his own discipline of plant physiology because of his wide interests in the methods of experimental science.

In the preface to his little book *Investigation by Experiment* (part of Edward Arnold's "Studies in Biology" series), published in 1970, at the end of his active career, he wrote:

... it is of the utmost importance that everyone should have some understanding of the nature, potentialities and limitations of science, also that we can only obtain this by carrying out original experiments ourselves. The methods of science are available to anyone for the solution of practical problems and the discovery of new knowledge in everyday life, but until this is generally realised and acted upon there will be little real understanding of science.

He used to tell his students that, although experiments do sometimes fail for technical reasons, more often than not the failed experiment is the result of unclear thinking at the design stage: "To design and carry out

a good experiment and to consider the result requires an exacting mental effort, often for long periods."

Heath is now best remembered for his studies of stomata, the little pores on the surfaces of leaves that permit the intake of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and thus regulate the vital process of photosynthesis. His distinguished contributions to this subject led to his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1960. When asked why he had devoted so much of his scientific career to what was then an obscure corner of plant physiology, he used to say that early in his career he was advised to find a topic that everyone thought was "sown up" and then seek aspects that had been overlooked.

Perhaps his most important contributions were his meticulous studies of the responses of stomata to the carbon dioxide concentration of the atmosphere. He laid a foundation for our present understanding of one of the main consequences of the pollution of the Earth's atmosphere.

The rise in the carbon dioxide

concentration, from around 280 parts per million in pre-industrial times to a value of nearly 360 today not only affects the climate via the "greenhouse" effect, but also causes the stomata of many plants to close partially. This alters the rate of transfer of water from the soil to the atmosphere, and it also affects the surface-atmosphere exchange of heat and contributes to global warming. Thus the ability of stomata to sense and respond to carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, once thought to be an obscure topic only of academic interest to Heath and a few other scientists, has become a major factor in our understanding of the forces that are driving climate change.

Today, priority is being given to science of immediate or foreseeable practical value, and most young scientists of the present generation are denied the free choice of a topic for study that was Heath's privilege.

In the 1950s and 1960s great advances were made in understanding the chemistry of photosynthesis, the process on which all life on Earth ultimately

depends. It was a brave decision by Heath to publish, as late as 1969, a book entitled *The Physiological Aspects of Photosynthesis* which omitted nearly all the recent advances in chemistry, and concentrated on what he said was the principal role of the physiologist: "To assist the biochemist and physical chemist with information as to how the systems studied operate in various environmental conditions, especially those in which the organisms normally exist".

It is important to remember where and when he wrote these words. In 1958 he had moved from Imperial College, London, where he was a Reader in Plant Physiology, to Reading University, where he became Professor of Horticulture. Here, all the department's research was carried out at Shinfield Grange, a country house surrounded by attractive gardens used for teaching ornamental horticulture to undergraduates, and with extensive greenhouse facilities for research.

This gave him a splendid opportunity to indulge in his love for experimentation, growing plants on a much larger scale

than was possible in the cramped conditions available to most plant scientists at that time. Very quickly, Reading became a major centre for plant physiology, and eminent visitors from the United States and elsewhere were often to be seen strolling in the gardens immersed in scientific discussions.

In 1961 the Agricultural Research Council decided to locate a special unit of Flower Crop Physiology at Shinfield Grange, and Heath became its director while he continued as head of the horticulture department. Thus began a period of real distinction in research at Reading, and long after his retirement Heath was pleased to see the continuing success of his former department, most recently the five-star rating for research quality in 1996.

Outside science, Peter Heath played the flute and sang in choirs, and one of his principal interests later in life was country dancing. He claimed he knew nothing of its attractions until one evening at Imperial College. He was working late in his office and was disturbed by



Heath: 'The methods of science are available to anyone'

the sound of music and merriment from a floor below. He went downstairs to make an angry complaint, but was so fascinated by what he saw that he joined in. He fell and broke a hip at the age of 89, but he was so determined to return to his physically active life that his recovery amazed his doctors and he was able to resume his country dancing within six months, continuing until only a few weeks before his death.

From 1955 to 1973 Heath was

a council member and treasurer of the Society for Experimental Biology, and he saw it grow from a small membership based mainly in the UK to a large organisation which today has over 2,000 members. He is warmly remembered within the society for his lively contributions to debates, and for the advice and encouragement he gave to young scientists.

Yet, during his own career, his beloved stomata remained a minority interest and the society never enabled him to organise a special session on stomatal physiology. The position has changed dramatically in recent years, and in April 1997 the society included a three-day symposium entitled "What Are Stomates For?" in its annual meeting at the University of Kent, with contributions from the United States, Australia and many other countries.

Peter Heath was not able to attend, but he sent warm greetings to the participants, saying, "I am glad to see that the vital importance of stomata is now acknowledged by the society, but I do deplore the use of the

term 'stomates' - a dreadful example of the Americanisation of our language!"

Terry Mansfield

Oscar Victor Sayer ("Peter") Heath, plant scientist, born London 26 July 1903; Assistant Demonstrator in Botany, Imperial College, London 1925-26; Research Student 1926-29; Leverhulme Research Fellow 1937-39; Special Lecturer in Plant Physiology 1946-58; Senior Principal Scientific Officer 1948-58; Empire Cotton Growing Corporation Senior Student, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad 1926-27; Plant Physiologist, Empire Cotton Growing Corporation Cotton Experiment Station, Barbados, South Africa 1927-36; Research Assistant, Research Institute of Plant Physiology, Imperial College, Rothamsted 1939-40; Professor of Horticulture, Reading University 1958-69 (Emeritus); FRS 1960; Director, Agricultural Research Council Unit of Crop Physiology 1962-70; Leverhulme Emeritus Research Fellow 1970-72; married 1930 Sally Burnstead (died 1984; two sons, one daughter); died London 16 June 1997.



'The Arm': Andrus, second from left, with, from left, Hal Serra, Joe Morello, Phil Woods and Sam Salvador, after a session at Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1948

Chuck Andrus

Because he was able to play pizzicato bass with such dexterity, Chuck Andrus was known to fellow members of the Woody Herman band as "The Arm". His speed meant that the band could play outrageously up-tempo numbers like "Caldonia" and "North West Passage" at a faster speed than ever before.

It was a folding wooden arm that Andrus had constructed in his army tent during the war in Korea that had impressed his fellow soldiers. A handyman who bemoaned the absence of any tools, Andrus was assigned to living in a tent with the 40th Division Army Band. He made his small living space as elegant as possible, and the arm, tinged from an orange box, held a candle over his bed so that he could read at night.

One day, while he was travelling with the jazz pianist John Williams and trumpeter Jerry Marshall, his truck was stopped at a bridge where bomb damage was being repaired. The three took advantage of the delay to wash in the nearby river. Andrus found a tool on the riverbed. He took it to be a pestle used by Korean women for pounding rice. "Hey," he called to Williams, "I got me a hammer."

He banged the object on some nearby rocks to demonstrate. Williams examined it, and he too, banged the rocks. When the driver called them back to the truck, a horrified infantryman, his face pale, seized the implement and hurled it as

far away as he could. "That," he informed an angry Andrus, "is a Chinese hand grenade."

The three men managed, unusually, to stay together all through their army service. They conspired to ensure that they went to Japan, where off-duty work for bandmen who could play at dances was plentiful and rewarding enough to allow them to establish themselves with their own geisha girls. But, in a series of disasters, they found themselves deposited instead in Korea by a ramshackle Second World War Liberty boat. Williams discovered that the Koreans grew marijuana plants to provide fibre for cloth, and he knew exactly what to do when he found a field of it "growing neck-high".

Until then they had relieved their tedium with another of Andrus's ingenuities. Back in the States he had emptied tubes of shaving cream and toothpaste, cleaned them out, and refilled them with high-class pop. The supply lasted until they reached Korea.

Discharged within days of each other, the three joined Charlie Barnett's band. Williams soon left to become famous with the Stan Getz Quintet (in 1955 Andrus played on one of Williams's trio albums) while Andrus pursued his career through the bands of Terry Gibbs, Claude Thornhill, Herbie Mann and others, until in 1961 he joined Woody Herman.

Nat Pierce, pianist with the

Woody Herman band, wrote an arrangement of Duke Ellington's "Satin Doll" as a showcase for the bass playing of Chuck Andrus. The piece was scheduled to be recorded for Philips in a New York studio on 22 November 1963. But first they set to work on their version of "A Taste of Honey". As soon as the number finished and the microphones were closed the distraught producer of the album rushed into the studio. "President Kennedy's just been assassinated," he shouted. The band took a break and, when the sensational news had been absorbed, recorded Andrus's "Satin Doll" feature.

As a long-time showman and Republican Herman's inclination would have been to persevere with the session, but the musicians were so agitated that, after "Satin Doll", work had to be abandoned for the day. So, whenever one hears Andrus's fine performance, one's attention is always deflected by the knowledge of the emotional turmoil in which it was created.

There weren't any good times for big bands after the Swing Era, but one of the really bad times was in the early Sixties. Flying, as he so often did, in the face of economic sense, Woody Herman chose 1962 to re-form his Herd. The bassist Chuck Andrus was right by his side.

Herman had big bands before. The one known as the First Herd came into being in 1944, the Second Herd in 1947

and the Third in 1952. The band with Andrus was called the Swinging Herd - a platitude in Herman terms because since 1936 his bands had never done anything else but swing.

In 1961 Herman, battered and bruised by years of struggle with his big bands, had cut down to a small group which included Nat Pierce on piano and Chuck Andrus on bass. But Pierce, a big-band enthusiast, worked hard to persuade Herman to reform the big band. A native Bostonian, Pierce kept very much in touch with the music scene in his home town, including the goings on at Berklee College of Music.

Berklee was and remains the world's finest centre for a jazz musician to receive his training. One of the most distinguished teachers at Berklee was the trumpeter Herb Pomeroy, who for decades has led a first-class big band drawn from the ranks of his students. Pierce convinced Herman to go back to a 16-piece band by producing a ready-made one with 12 musicians taken from Pomeroy's group. The *fait accompli* was to prove pivotal in Herman's long career and the dynamic and inspired band that resulted was unique for its time.

A long residency at the noisy Metropole Café in New York ensured the band's American fame. The stage was only a couple of feet wide, and the band had to stand along it in a file 40 feet long. Andrus stood next to

his colleague and friend the drummer Jake Hanna, one of the best half-dozen players ever. After nine weeks the management wanted to extend the band's stay, but by now the band was fully booked for years ahead. Its tours caused uproar throughout the world and it was enormously successful in Britain, where Andrus had a notable role in a BBC 2 broadcast which the band recorded.

Its momentum continued for many years, but Andrus left in 1965 to freelance successfully in New York. His trio played at the White House for President Johnson, and returned there in the spring of 1968 for the Ambassadors' Ball.

Although he continued to play professionally, Andrus returned to his home town of Holyoke, where he worked in a law office until his retirement. He moved to Florida in 1993 and married his childhood sweetheart Elaine the following year.

He played regularly each week at the Governor's Club in Palm Beach until a month ago. Two weeks before his death, when John Williams visited him with a tenor sax playing friend, Andrus got out of bed and played a few numbers with them.

Steve Vose

Charles Edmund ("Chuck") Andrus, bass player, born Holyoke, Massachusetts 17 November 1928; twice married (two daughters); died Boca Raton, Florida 12 June 1997.

George Lambor

While fascination with the ancient past is common enough, few show the dedication of George Lambor.

In 1981 a return trip to his native Poland included a visit to Biskupin, where archaeologists had uncovered an Iron Age lakeside village. To inform the general public an exhibition had opened which, Lambor agreed, deserved to be seen outside Poland. Back in Britain he found enthusiasm but a notable lack of practical help. Then in his mid-fifties, he took a second job, as a waiter in a Hove hotel, to raise money and during a nine-month tour of Britain in 1984 the exhibition was seen by 92,000 visitors. Four years later,

when his Polish friends wanted a British exhibition, he used similar methods to finance it.

George Lambor was born in the Carpathian town of Nowy Saccz in 1927. In 1939, at the Russo-German invasion of Poland, he was only 12 and it was decided he would be safer outside the country. While his father and mother and his younger brother and sister remained in Poland, he travelled to France with two aunts. When France, too, was overrun, he came to Britain. Throughout the Second World War he was at Ampleforth, the Benedictine public school, and there learnt that his father, a Resistance

activist, had been executed. Lambor was always fascinated by antiquity and planned to become an archaeologist, but his father's death meant he needed to help to support his family. He enrolled for a course in Polish law at Oxford but, as the country was part of the Soviet bloc, its legal system was being revolutionised. At the urging of his family, he switched to economics, to find it so unappealing that he dropped out and took a job on a Polish-language newspaper. A variety of occupations followed, including a period as stage manager to a touring theatrical company in which his first wife, Margaret Paliser, was a dancer.

When the touring company broke up, he and Margaret went to Scotland. To make ends meet, he again had to take anything that offered itself, including door-to-door salesmanship and work at a sawmill. Meanwhile, he was carving out a career as a short-story writer; editors compared his work with that of another Polish expatriate, Joseph Conrad.

In the mid-Sixties the couple moved to Brighton, where Lambor opened his first antiquities gallery, because, in his own words, he wanted to "get on first-name terms with as many antiquities as possible". Later this was followed by another in the Chenil Galleries in Chelsea.

As he got involved in the antiquities business, he became concerned at the not always ill-founded charges of illicit dealing levelled at some in the trade. In 1981 he founded ADA, the Antiquities Dealers Association, which laid down rigid conditions for the conduct of business. For six years he was its secretary and subsequently a committee member.

He also initiated a campaign to establish a register of antiquities in private hands. Besides confirming provenance - itself a deterrent to illegality - by ensuring that the whereabouts of a given antiquity was known at any time, it would aid serious research.

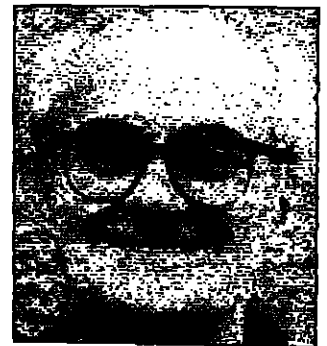
At the same time he wanted to persuade museums to make far more of their collections accessible, as well as providing facilities for all students, including non-professional ones. All formed part of another of his major preoccupations: that of bringing together the often antagonistic parties involved in antiquities. In 1991 he founded A.L.G., the Antiquities Liaison Group, as a forum for academic and amateur bodies. A combination of apathy and self-interest frustrated progress.

From the mid-Eighties Lambor had been considering launching an antiquities magazine, not only for collectors, but for all interested in the ancient

world. In the autumn of 1986 he made an attempt with *Agora Magazine*, aimed at customers of his Brighton gallery. Its reception was enthusiastic enough to prove he had found a gap in the market and in February 1987, renamed *Ancient*, it was launched. It now sells not only in Britain, but in many other parts of the world. With its last issue it broke into the American market and it is poised to break into Australia, where it already has a number of subscribers.

With Lambor's death questions hang over its future, but there is hope that it will continue.

Ward Rutherford



Lambor: 'first-name terms'

George Lambor, antiquities collector and dealer, born Nowy Saccz, Poland 12 April 1927; married 1952 Margaret Paliser (two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1982); 1982 Florangel Serrano de Arocha; died Hove, East Sussex 16 June 1997.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

BAKER: On 9 June, to Ingrid and Andrew, a daughter, Jessica Sophie Bleikroeder.

GOLDEN: On 22 June 1997, to Alison and Andrew, a daughter, Hannah Susan, sister to Emily Jane.

DEATHS

PITTINGER: The Rev Dr Norman Pittenger, at King's Lynn, on 19 June, aged 91 years. Funeral service at St Margaret's Church, King's Lynn, on Monday 30 June, at 1pm. Details from St Margaret's Vicarage, King's Lynn, 01553 767090, or Thornalley Funeral Services, 01553 771399. Memorial service in Cambridge at a later date.

IN MEMORIAM

HOWARD: David. We think of you every moment, but today, 34 June, in a just world, we should be celebrating your 47th birthday. All our love. Mum and Dad.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 2012 or fax to 0171-293 2010.

Birthdays

Sir Anthony Barrowclough QC, former Ombudsman, 73; Mr Jeff Beck, blues and rock guitarist, 53; Lucien Blodiere QC, 63; Lord Braine of Wheatley, former MP, 83; M Claude Chabrol, film director, 67; Mr Robin Cutler, former Director-General, Forestry Commission, 63; Mr Garfield Davies, trade union leader, 62; Mrs Anita Desai, novelist, 60; Mr Roger Dobson, Director-General, Institution of Civil Engineers, 61; Mr Jack Dunnett, former President, Football League, 75; Professor Kenneth Durran, former Vice-Chancellor and Rector, Huddersfield University, 68; Mr Mick Fleetwood, rock musician, 55; Professor Sir Fred Hoyle, astronomer and science fiction writer, 82; Miss Betty Jackson, fashion designer, 48; Sir Edward Jackson, former diplomat, 72; Mr John McCormick, Controller, BBC Scotland, 53; Mrs Emma McKendrick, Headmistress, the Royal School, Bath, 34; Mr Owen Paterson MP, 41; Professor John Prentice, microbiologist, 75; Miss Mary Wesley, writer, 84; Sir John Whitford, former High Court judge, 84.

Anniversaries

Birthe: St John of the Cross, mystic, 1542; Farinelli (Carlo Broschi), castrato singer, 1705; William Henry (W.H.) Smith, bookseller and politician, 1823; Jack Dempsey, boxer, 1895; Brian Alexander Johnston, broadcaster, 1912; Deaths: Lucrezia Borgia, Duchess of Ferrara, 1519. On this day: Robert the Bruce and his army defeated the forces of Edward II at Bannockburn, 1314; the Mother Grand Lodge of the Order of Freemasonry was inaugurated in London, 1717; the Mersey Tunnel was opened, 1971. Today is the Feast Day of St Bartholomew of Farnham, St John the Baptist, St Ralph or Raoul of Bourges and St Simplicius of Autun.

Lectures

National Gallery: Alexander Sauris, "Late of the Tate (iv): Gauguin", 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Sally Dormer, "Mother of God: images of the Virgin in medieval art", 2.30pm. National Portrait Gallery: Louise Leates, "Thomas Jenkins (1722-98): painter, art dealer and banker to the Grand Tourists", 1.10pm. RIBA Architecture Centre, London W1: Nicholas Grimshaw, "Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners", 6.30pm. Institute of Economic Affairs, London SW1: Professor Lawrence Mead, "Workfare: lessons for Britain?", 6.30pm.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. The Queen's Company Grenadier Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.05am. Band provided by the Welsh Guards.

Publication without licence infringement of copyright

LAW REPORT

24 June 1997

Banier v News Group Newspapers Ltd; Banier v Times Newspapers Ltd; Chancery Division (Mr Justice Lightman) 19 June 1997

The practice by which a newspaper published a copyright photograph after a licence to publish had been granted to another newspaper, but without itself applying for a licence, was unjustified and unlawful.

Mr Justice Lightman granted summary judgment to the plaintiff in his action for infringement of copyright against News Group Newspapers Ltd. The plaintiff was a photographer of international repute. Princess Caroline of Monaco, who was reported to have suffered from alopecia, had allowed him to take a photograph of her head and shoulders in which she wore neither a hat nor scarf. The photograph was included in a collection of the plaintiff's photographs.

Times Newspapers ("TN") applied to the plaintiff's agent for a licence to publish the photograph in the *Times*. There was an issue in the action against them whether such a licence was granted: TN contended that the agent had granted a li-

cence on terms that no fee need be paid but that TN should acknowledge the plaintiff as the photographer and refer to the collection.

News Group Newspapers ("NGN") wished to publish the photograph in the *Sun*. They tried to obtain the necessary licence from the agent, but could not contact him in time. NGN went ahead and published the photograph, with an article headed "The courage of Caroline - royal bald for photos", in which the plaintiff was acknowledged as the photographer and his collection was mentioned.

The plaintiff claimed, in both actions, infringement of his copyright in the photograph. TN and NGN applied for consolidation of the two actions and their transfer to the county court. The plaintiff applied for summary judgment against NGN.

Nicholas Gardner, Solicitor Advocate (Herbert Smith) for the plaintiff; Denise McFarland (Legal Adviser, News Group Newspapers Ltd and So-

licitor, Times Newspapers Ltd) for the defendants.

Mr Justice Lightman, dealing with the application for summary judgment first, said that there was clearly no real issue on the question of the subsistence of copyright in the photograph nor of the plaintiff's ownership of it, nor was there any arguable case that NGN had been granted a licence to publish it.

NGN had contended, generally, that it was common press practice after one newspaper had published a copyright photograph for other newspapers to publish it without waiting for the grant of a licence by the copyright owner. They would, where appropriate, expect to pay a licence fee retrospectively.

That might be common newspaper practice and one which newspapers normally got away with. The risk of infringement proceedings might from a business and circulation point of view be worth taking;

it might be economic to "publish and be damned". It was, however, plainly unjustified and unlawful, and the sooner that was recognised the better for all concerned. The adoption of the practice was not a passport to infringe copyright.

Section 30(1) of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 provided that fair dealing with a work for the purpose of criticism or review did not infringe any copyright in the work or another work provided that it was accompanied by a sufficient acknowledgement. That defence was available in the case where the copyright work was a photograph.

What amounted to fair dealing must depend on the facts of the particular case and must to a degree be a matter of impression. What was of prime importance was to consider the real objective of the party using the copyright work. It was present case that the objective in publishing the photograph in the *Sun* was to illustrate any re-

view or criticism of any copyright work. The article was a news story, and the photograph had a prominent place to make the story come to life. It was true that reference was made to Princess Caroline's stunning pose, but that was merely an aspect of the news story.

NGN had also contended that the grant of the licence to TN free of charge on terms that reference was made to the plaintiff had led them to believe that the plaintiff did not or would not object to publication of the photograph by NGN. That contention was imaginative but totally lacking in any other quality.

There was accordingly no conceivable defence to the action. The plaintiff was *prima facie* entitled to a declaration of his ownership of the copyright in the photograph, an injunction to restrain infringement and an inquiry as to damages. In the light of that decision, the summons for consolidation fell away, and the parties had agreed that the action against TN should continue in the High Court.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

The green odyssey will not always be applauded

It's a rather heady feeling to wake up and find you are living in a paragon among nations, to hear your Prime Minister commanding the international stage and that hackneyed phrase "giving a lead" actually meaning something for once. Today Britain is up there with the good of the earth, plausibly urging other nations to mead their ways and follow the practical example of Britain in reducing carbon dioxide emissions, thinking afresh about energy use and public transport.

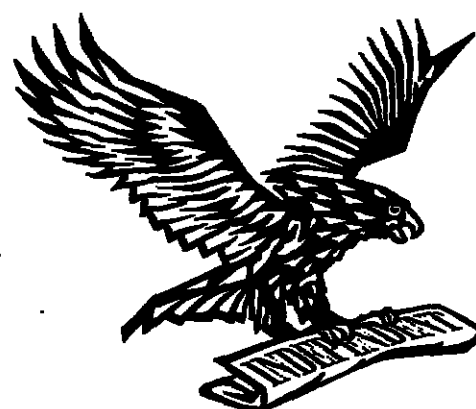
Let's not play the cynic and observe that Tony Blair's interest in environmentalism had not hitherto been large, unlike his Foreign Secretary's. Both the style and the substance of Mr Blair's address yesterday to the Earth Summit conference in New York were admirable. The science is now well established. Global warming is happening with demonstrably ill effects. Reductions in the emissions of greenhouse gases can be effected without revolutionary changes in public policy or private consumption. The British propositions for targeted reductions within a decade are practical. PS: Tony Blair's intention to make the next G7-plus-Russia summit more focused and businesslike is overdue and a tribute to this government's dislike of grandiloquence. The adjective "roundhead" has been banded around in recent weeks, but if this instinct leads to international gatherings where there is more

substantial discussion and less grandstanding (and dressing up in cowboy boots), let's hear it for Colonel Ironside.

For all that, the Government needs to watch it. For a Scandinavian country to instruct the world, as if from a pulpit, is acceptable; their international entanglements are few. They are small, unthreatening voices, and are reacted to as such.

We, though, are in a different category. Redundant they may be, but this country still possesses nuclear weapons. We have a large, export-orientated weapons and aircraft industry. It is not just that these have "environmental" consequences, it is that Britain's stock of international moral credibility is necessarily limited by history and current diplomatic posture – how much pressure, for example, are we going to bring through the Commonwealth on our kith and kin in the Antipodes if they take against taxes on aircraft fuel, something now being proposed with good reasons by the European Union? Britain likes to bask in the "special relationship" with the United States; how many overt attacks on American culture (of which we remain heavy consumers) will it take before American politicians and public start resenting the Brits?

Much environmentalism is fairly costless. Signing the bio-diversity treaty and forswearing rain-forest products is cheap enough, for us. It's when going green calls up increases in regressive taxes



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which hit the poor; when neo-liberal market solutions just don't work; when environmentalism entails heavy-handed intervention ... it's then that the Government runs its biggest risk in opening so ostentatiously its green flank.

There, in the darkness of the Tory back benches, sits John Gummer, a warning of the dangers. The man who went to the Rio Summit in 1992 amid such fanfare delivered only partially when he returned home; he was and is committed, but his cabinet colleagues proved mostly uninterested in the environmental dimensions of transport, housing and the fiscal system. It was not

just Tory intransigence or a blind faith in the market. The problem for the Major government was the fickleness of public opinion. A chorus of approval greeted the decision last week to ban auto-cooling gadgets for soft drinks, which release large amounts of CFCs. The public will also give its approval to proposals to improve public transport and strengthen planning controls – and it was remarkable how little opposition greeted John Prescott's unilateral abandonment of the roads programme the other day. But we also like lowish taxes, running our own car(s) and ensuring our nephews and nieces get

access to that new housing development out in the green fields. That is the public how will green Mr Blair explain the huge tailbacks that will be caused by his millennium expo at Greenwich?

Already there are signs of politician's glibness on questions that touch basic, everyday and intractable behaviour, as when Mr Cook yesterday claimed he did not want to stop people using their cars ... all he wanted was to raise the quality of the alternative, public transport. It is an argument often heard in education – it is not a matter of banning private schools but bringing state schools up to par. It is a good argument, the only argument possible in a liberal society, but it is potentially hugely costly.

Environmentalism as a philosophy has a twisted and complicated origin in the history of ideas, first left then right. Nowadays, the green credentials of certain corporate chiefs notwithstanding, it has to be regarded as a left of centre affair. That is for one very good reason: it usually involves more rather than less government. Is this what Tony Blair and New Labour are really about: tolls and controls. A congestion tax is still a tax. One of Labour's ambitions in office is to recalibrate the relationship between citizen and state, between government and the governed. Seeing Tony Blair up there in the bright lights off Broadway might, temporarily, endear him and his colleagues

to the public back home. But sooner or later, if Labour wants to accomplish half of what it promises, it is going to have to start telling the public some unpleasant things – like stop driving, pay more, consume less. Mr Blair's speech was a good start, but only a start, in preparing opinion in order to get such controversial decisions through. The words sounded good and were widely applauded. Some of the decisions that must necessarily follow them will be hated and booed.

Ay, she's every inch a king

If King Lear is to be played by a woman – as Hamlet and Richard II before her/him – why stop there? Lear as a teenager, for instance? Why shouldn't older actors get a geriatric version of a youth play such as *Love's Labour's Lost*? The permutations are endless: how about a black Shylock or a gay Falstaff or a transvestite Cleopatra? They'll come, depend upon it. The stories and language are strong enough to be endlessly bounced on by pirouetting trend-setters. After the fashion passes, they'll still be there, fresh and intriguing, ready for the next "radical and contemporary" reinterpretation. That's why the old feller's great.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Child support system is deaf to justice

Sir: Polly Toynbee is unwise to assume that the failure of the Child Support Agency is anything so simple as "a fathers' conspiracy to defraud" (article, 23 June).

The study of single parents in 20 countries by Professor Jonathan Bradshaw and others found that in none of them does maintenance achieve a major contribution to the support of lone parents. This may prompt the suspicion that the money is not always there.

The CSA's formula cannot guarantee that the money is there. Though the scheme of departures from the formula introduced in the 1995 Act looks good at a casual glance, the sums allowed under it are negligible. It does not end cases like the man who was advised by the CSA to raise the money to pay maintenance by selling the car, without which he could not work. As is illustrated by Polly Toynbee's own story of the daughter who eloped with her stepfather and whose mother was bound to support her, a formula and justice are incompatible.

No parliamentarian will defend illegal resistance, but such resistance is the inevitable consequence of a deaf system which cannot give so much as a hearing to injustice. That story also illustrates that the relations of the sexes are not a zero-sum game, and women are no happier with the CSA than men.

Polly Toynbee looks forward to the day when the CSA is seen as "the friend of all lone parents". That will not happen until they are allowed to choose whether to avail themselves of its services, instead of being compelled to do so by a total denial of benefit if they refuse. This is perhaps the grossest example of oppression in the whole of our existing law.

EARL RUSSELL
Liberal Democrat Social Security Spokesman
House of Lords
London SW1

Executions
ugs trade

Split parties and let minds meet

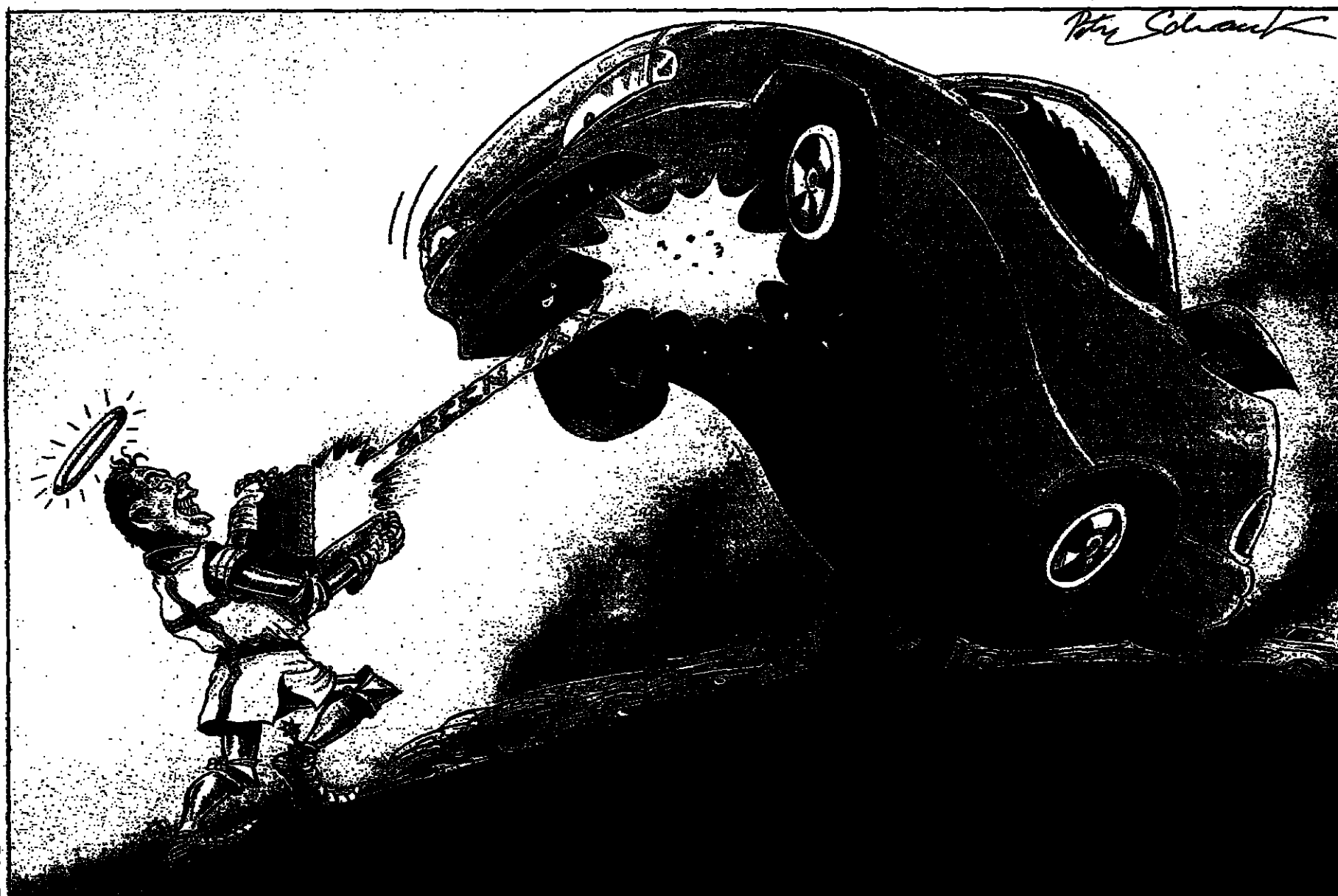
Sir: The Tory leadership contest has underlined the fact that we have moved conclusively into an era in which the survival of democracy depends upon proportional representation and the likelihood of government by coalition.

The abortive Clarke-Redwood pact demonstrated the impossibility of honestly maintaining large-party coherence (Hague's victory proves nothing). New Labour, a party "disciplined" with gags and prohibitions, sports the pairing of Prescott and Blair. These fantasy couplings are purely promotional: there can be no marriage of true minds in such circumstances. In practice the incumbents have to settle for merely doing things together – it hardly seems to matter what so long as the perquisites of power flow unchallenged.

Public life may recently have been curdled by sleaze; it is certainly now befuddled by humbug. Can we have our divisions back please?

MALCOLM ROSS
Dartington, Devon

Sir: "Thatcher endorses Hague 'to stop Clarke'" (headline, 19 June). Er, isn't this just the kind of tactical



voting that the Tories have recently been so scathing about in the general election?

LEN CLARKE
Uxbridge, Middlesex

Victims of the litigious society

Sir: At long last tobacco companies, at least in the US, have been forced to recognise publicly the devastating damage to health caused by their products ("Tobacco firms to pay \$360bn to settle law suits", 21 June). As a doctor I applaud this, and welcome the sweeping restrictions on tobacco promotion which have been proposed.

If the only way to achieve this was lawsuits against the tobacco companies then so be it. But as the British Medical Association leaps to urge hospital trusts in this country to engage in similar litigation on behalf of their patients, I fear the wrong message is being promulgated.

People must accept some responsibility for their own health. After all, the risks of smoking have been widely known for over 30 years now. And people haven't been forced to smoke by the tobacco giants – they have chosen to do so, knowing the risks. What will be next? Will alcoholics be encouraged to sue the breweries? Are overweight people going to sue the bakeries and the supermarkets? Should people with sunburn sue the tour operator? Let's not lose sight of personal responsibility. We are increasingly becoming a society of victims.

HUGH J THOMSON
Consultant Surgeon
Birmingham

France is no disaster – yet

Sir: Mario Vargas Llosa's *schadenfreude* at France's current predicament ("The disaster striking France", 20 June) seems both naive and misguided.

The chief cause of unemployment in France is not socialist regulation but the attempt to conform to the Maastricht criteria for monetary union, which involve restraints on public spending and an overvalued franc. As a result, France is locked into deflationary policies during recession. There is nothing socialist about the single-currency project, which is based on vintage monetarist principles.

In Britain we were fortunate enough to be forced out of the ERM by liberal financiers such as George Soros. Financial orthodoxy predicted dire inflationary consequences, but in reality Britain gained a temporary competitive advantage from the devaluation.

Mr Vargas Llosa is naive if he accepts the conventional wisdom that the UK economy is in finer shape than that of France simply because we British are spared labour regulation. In so far as British unemployment is lower than elsewhere it is a result of cheap labour and job insecurity. Britain also creates artificial jobs by subsidising poverty pay through the benefits system. Nothing would be more likely to assist the rise of the National Front than Mr Vargas Llosa fears than the attempt to

lower France to British standards of employment protection, education and health care.

ROBERT CLAYTON
Leeds

Polar bears in the exam room

Sir: Grim though the polar bears are on their clashing ice floes, Landsmeer's painting was not always shrouded during examinations at Royal Holloway College (letter, 21 June). When I sat my finals during a ferociously hot June fortnight shortly after the Second World War, they diverted and inspired my more distraught moments – along with the opulent beauties of the *Marriage Market*, and assorted dramas of Frith's thronged *Roadway Station*, and the many other riches of Thomas Holloway's wonderful collection.

I remember them well, and gratefully, as I obtained a better degree than I probably deserved, inspired I believe by the vivid representations of all humanity around me. Indeed, I recommend that all important examinations should take place in an art gallery. At least those painful hours would be enlivened by the clamorous variety of life awaiting the unhappy contestant on the brink of his future. Whether the same beneficial results would follow finals taken in a contemporary art gallery, I would not hazard to say.

BARBARA SPRING
Salisbury, Cornwall

A new definition of rape needed

Sir: Glenda Cooper's article on the argument for a new crime of date rape (19 June) quotes the erroneous opinion that a "lesser" offence would somehow reduce the standard of proof. All crimes must be proved beyond reasonable doubt, not "beyond probable doubt".

The real problem with rape is that the crime itself requires proof that the man knew or was reckless about his victim's lack of consent to intercourse. Presumably this *mens rea* requirement would still exist in any new "date rape" law.

If it were abolished, making a man guilty simply if it is proved beyond reasonable doubt he had intercourse with a woman who did not consent, the law would be clearer and fairer to victims. It would send out a clear message that men must be sure there is consent before they have intercourse.

WYN DAVIES
Burry Port, Dyfed

Bike or camel?

Sir: While agreeing with the sentiments of Peter Metcalfe (letter, 19 June) on the loss to the nation of Lawrence of Arabia's transcripts and possibly his motorcycle, I am not wholly in agreement with his suggestion on the form of a monument to Lawrence astride his Brough Superior 1000.

Lawrence will forever be

remembered for his leadership of an Arab irregular army against the Turks. He rode a camel for most of the time, or otherwise in an army Rolls-Royce tender. It would be more fitting if the monument reflected those achievements. Why not Lawrence in Arab dress seated on his camel?

G R GREEN
West Wickham, Kent

McMenace

Sir: During the recent "McLibel" case, one piece of evidence which confirms the burger chain's attitude to its customers has been overlooked. I refer of course to the blatant incitement to violence arising from its donation of "squidger guns", cleverly moulded in the shape of dinosaurs, to impressionable youngsters whose helpless parents have been cajoled into buying them McDonald's "Happy Meals".

These brightly-coloured and innocent-looking weapons have led to numerous unsavoury incidents in my own household, including water-fights in the hallway, the drenching of a brand-new sofa, and several threats of a quick shower to innocent passers-by, not to mention plenty of tears when the guilty parties are deprived of their newfound instruments of terror.

I therefore intend to launch a campaign for the withdrawal of McSquidgers from distribution, or, failing that, to demand that adequate means of protection are offered to the poor souls who are funding their purchase. McUmbrillas, perhaps, or even McMacs?

DAVID MERCER
Bedford

Lost mystery of Stonehenge

Sir: The great majority of people see Stonehenge only from the A303. Children going to the West Country look forward to the sight. To cut-and-cover this road, as recommended by Professor Buchanan (letter, 20 June) and thus prevent anyone from seeing this view is outrageous. To use public money, whether Lottery or otherwise, to do this work in order that the stones can only be viewed by making a payment (perhaps to a private firm) is highly improper.

I understand that 50 per cent of visitors to Stonehenge felt dissatisfied afterwards. It's not surprising. Having been brought from London by coach they expect something more, although they don't know quite what. In the 1930s, when as a boy I dozed in the sun on the stones, they were an awe-inspiring sight. Now that has all gone and no amount of restructuring can recapture it. Forget them; there are far more important things to be done.

B H BATEMAN
Motcombe, Dorset

Ignorance has the last word

Sir: May we return to the matter raised by Walter Roberts ("Grammarians Weep", 14 June), about which I have a question: are there any people who, having been taught to speak grammatically, then decide arbitrarily to ignore the rules they learnt and make up their own, and follow the example of those who have not had their advantage? I think not.

The people whose speech is lamented by Mr Roberts (among others) are unfortunate enough never to have been taught the rules in the first place. If we are invited to see this usage as a "rich and fascinating phenomenon" (Letters, 16 June) or as a "lost word", then ignorance has the last word. A bleak prospect indeed.

SHEELAGH FLAWN
East Preston, West Sussex

Likely yarn

Sir: The "tow rag" of your recent correspondence has an origin closer to home than suggested by your previous correspondents. Tow is the name given to one product of the preparatory processes of linen manufacture. Fine-quality yarn is spun from the longer flax fibres while coarser yarn is spun from the residual shorter fibres. These shorter fibres are known as tow and the resulting yarn as tow yarn. Its traditional use was in weaving coarse cloth used for heavy-duty cleaning or for sacking, and in the manufacture of ropes.

BRENDA COLLINS
Research Officer
The Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum
Lisburn, Co Down

Sir: I fear that the origin of the expression "tow-rag" (Letters, 20 June) is altogether more literal – and horrible – than any previously described. I read the following passage from George Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London* only this morning:

Less than half the tramps actually bathed ... but they all washed their faces and feet, and the horrid grubby little cloths known as tow-rags which they bind around their toes.

Their purpose, however, still remains unclear.

JONATHAN COPE
London SW16

investigation

How did a US missile earmarked for the Marine Corps kill Lebanese women and children last year? Robert Fisk follows the trail from the Middle East to Washington and finds that Israel's arms build-up is coming at the expense of America's own armed forces

A rocket is returned to sender

The coding on the side of the missile fragment was difficult to read. When an Israeli helicopter pilot fired his rocket into the back of an ambulance in southern Lebanon on 13 April last year – killing four small children and two women – it detonated into dozens of pieces. But the legend "AGM 114C" identified it as a 5ft 3in American-made Hellfire – "AGM" stands for air-to-ground missile – jointly made by Rockwell International in Duluth, Georgia, and by Martin Marietta of Orlando, Florida. And it was with this information that I set off to the United States last spring, in the hope of meeting the men who made the missile which tore to pieces the children and women in the Lebanese ambulance – little realising how long my journey would turn out to be.

When the *Independent* on Sunday's "Review" published my interviews with the men from the companies which now owned the missile-makers, Boeing and Lockheed, our front cover – dominated by a photograph of the missile fragment – caught the attention of two men in the American and European defence industries. One of them telephoned me in Beirut to say that the code number 04939 – clearly visible on the manufacturer's plate – proved that the missile had been made in the Lockheed Martin plant in Florida. The other source agreed to meet me in Europe with a list of NATO codings in his hand which proved that the Hellfire missile fired into the Lebanese ambulance had never been sold to the Israelis. The National Stock Number on the missile fragment, he pointed out, was in a 4-2-3-4 digit sequence, the second section of which read "01". The Israeli coding would have been

"31" – "01" stood for the United States. And the letter "M" on the lot number suggested it had been sold to the US Marine Corps.

The Israeli pilot who targeted the ambulance on 18 April last year – the Israelis claimed it was being driven by a member of the Hizballah guerrilla movement, which was untrue – had in fact fired two missiles at the vehicle. One of them failed to detonate and the unexploded rocket revealed a complete set of code numbers which – according to our defence sources – proved that the missile was contracted for use by the US armed forces in 1986 and manufactured in 1988. It had been made just in time for the Gulf War and, according to *The Independent's* sources, may have been delivered to Israel immediately after the end of hostilities, probably by a US marine amphibious craft which put into the munitions pier in Haifa harbour in spring 1991.

No one, of course, should be surprised that Israel uses the weaponry of its superpower ally. Its F-15 fighter-bombers, its A-10 ground-attack aircraft, its field artillery and many of its tanks are US-made; Washington regularly rearsures Israel of its loyalty by announcing the sale of aircraft and armour to Tel Aviv. When Saddam Hussein fired Scud rockets at Israel, America installed Patriot anti-missile missiles to defend the country. Israel relies upon US firepower in much the same way as Syria depends upon Russian-made equipment – and as the Hizballah needs Iran's comparatively puny military largess to fight its war against Israeli occupation forces inside southern Lebanon.

But the transfer of weaponry from US armouries – with virtually no conditions attached

to its use – is provoking anger among American military officers who believe that Israel's sympathisers inside the US administration and on Capitol Hill are allowing Israel a *de facto* free access to the armouries of America's armed forces. The links between Israel and US lawmakers – and armaments manufacturers – are now so close that there is no longer any public debate in Washington about the massive weapons transfers made to Israel or their use against civilian targets in Lebanon. When Lockheed was asked by *The Independent* to explain its policy towards Israel after it targeted Lockheed missiles at the ambulance, a spokesman for the company said he had "no information" about the event. When we offered to send photographs of the identification codings to Lockheed, the spokesman refused to accept them. In fact, Lockheed had no interest in co-operating with our inquiry – not least because it is a joint partner in missile development with the Israeli Rafael aeronautics company.

But it is the virtually unchallenged ability of Israel to rifle through US military stocks that has so upset serving and retired officers in the US armed forces who, in the course of a two-week *Independent* inquiry into arms transfers to Israel, spoke of their fury at watching thousands of tanks and armour taken from US inventories over a period of 20 years, and transferred to Israel despite objections from the Department of Defence. In the late 1970s, according to one officer who was serving in northern Europe, senior US military personnel objected to a vast quantity of armour being withdrawn from Germany for transfer to Israel. "I was in the headquarters in Germany with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and he went through the roof," he said. "We were told to hand over hundreds of tanks at very short notice – and this was at the height of the Cold War. We were opposite the Fulda Gap and the Warsaw Pact was on the other side and we were screaming that we were depleting our assets at a moment of high European tension. The general was saying 'fuck them' – he used those words – but he was excluded from the decision. The Department of Defence were directed under orders to turn over the tanks – we didn't do it voluntarily."

An air force officer recalled how, around the same period, he returned to his naval air station in the US after leave to discover half his squadron of aircraft being repainted with Israeli markings. "We only had 50 per cent of our squadron left – I was flabbergasted," he said. "I

wasn't consulted. I was told 'they've got to go to Israel – we're out of business for a while.'" Many serving US officers suspect that Israel received large amounts of surplus US weaponry after the 1991 Gulf War – as a *quid pro quo* for staying out of the conflict when Saddam fired missiles at Tel Aviv. Officials who served on the State Department's Defence Security Assistance Agency – ultimately responsible for transfers to Israel – deny this and General Gus Pagonis, who was the head of US military logistics during the war against Iraq, insisted to us that "everything we took off the ships [in Saudi Arabia] I put back aboard them en route to Arabia".

However, General Pagonis – now head of logistics for the Sears Roebuck chain of department stores – added: "I don't know if the ships stopped anywhere on the way." A former Marine officer said that he believed a ship carrying US Hellfire missiles may have been routed to the US via the Israeli port of Haifa, unloading part of its cargo on the munitions pier as part of an "in theatre" transfer of weapons to America's closest ally in the Middle East. Other retired officers asked what happened to dozens of US Army and Marine Stinger missiles that were officially listed as "missing" in the Gulf in 1991. The Defence Department's Inspector General inventoried 60 per cent of the Stinger armoury and found that 188 of the missiles had disappeared. In the same year, the US military's General Accounting Office found that 2,185 missiles – Stingers, Dragons and Redeyes – were apparently missing from 11 US European weapons storage sites. Where did they go?

In all, the US Marines are recorded as having fired 159 Hellfire air-to-ground missiles during the 1991 conflict with Iraq – almost the same number of missiles the Israelis fired in just three weeks in southern Lebanon last year, along with at least 26,000 shells. Another US Gulf veteran recalled seeing "miles and miles of truck containers on the Tapline road in Saudi [which follows the Trans-Arabia Pipeline], loaded with shells and missiles – I know we did make transfers at about that time, including to coalition allies. We transferred some missiles that were, as we say, 'beginning to get to the end of their freshness'." In fact, former US and serving air force personnel say that a number of Martin Marietta Hellfire missiles manufactured in the late 1980s and apparently taken to the Gulf were malfunctioning, hitting vehicles but failing to explode on impact – just as one of the Hellfires (dated 1988) failed to explode against the

ambulance in southern Lebanon. Other Hellfires failed to explode in Lebanon during this period and were later found by Hizballah guerrillas who loaded them onto trucks. They were presumably sent to Iran for examination.

"A awful lot of shells are transferred to Israel and nobody knows a hell of a lot about it," a US defence analyst remarked on the day Israel put its latest request for 98,000 artillery shells to the US this month. "The military here is downstaging its wants to get rid of some ordnance because it's old. But an equal amount of good material just leaves our stocks for Israel without a by-your-leave. It goes through the legal channels but no one reports it, no one questions it, no one asks where it's used or how it's used. And if it kills innocent folk, do you think the Clinton administration is going to make a song and dance about it? They'll say that criticising Israel may 'damage the peace process'. Every assurance has been given to Israel that it will not be touched."

Arms transfers to Israel have to undergo a period of 30 days' formal notice. Major defence equipment with a value of more than \$14m requires congressional notification – amounts of less than \$14m do not. "Anyone on the Hill knows that challenging any transfers to Israel is not going to help their political career," a former army colonel commented. "The Israeli lobby is very, very powerful. It's not going to be criticised." In fact, after it used US Navy anti-tank cluster bombs on civilian areas of west Beirut in 1982, Israel was taken to task in Washington. President Reagan briefly held up deliveries from Dower Air Force Base of US F-15 and F-16 fighter-bombers to Israel while congressional hearings investigated the use of the cluster bombs. But even when classified material was edited out of the final report of the hearings, the State Department refused to publish the full findings on the grounds that the entire sessions were "classified".

Indeed, "classified" is a word that occurs fairly often when you ask about weapons transfers to Israel. The congressional branch of the National Archives contains numerous references to classified, "legally approved transfers" to Israel. But they are not open to public inspection. Nor was anyone in Washington able to explain last week what Israel needs 98,000 new shells for. Surely not to fire at Egypt or Jordan, its partners in peace. At West Bank towns in the event of a second, armed intifada, perhaps? Or into Lebanon this hot, dangerous summer?

A fragment of the missile (main photograph) used in the ambulance attack carries the "01" coding, showing it was made for US armed forces. A 13-year-old girl, Manar al-Khulad (top), was one of the victims of the Hellfire missile, featured above in a corporate advert. Photographs: Najla Al-Jahjah (top), Saleh Rifai (main)



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TSB	14.9%	£190.09	£9,050.12	£596.88
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Hurry to Hong Kong's closing down sale

I have been directed to publicise the magnificent forthcoming auction of items following the return of Hong Kong to the Chinese. Yes, there will be a Grand Closing Down and Handing Over Sale, at which many valuable items of Hong Kong origin will be available for purchase which have never been on the market before and probably never will again!

There is nothing like enough space to list everything in this wonderful end-of-lease sale. But I think your appetite will be whetted by this small selection of just some of the lots which will go under the hammer in the near future:

One Royal Yacht, "Britannia", ideal for helping to close down colonies and sailing away into the distance bearing outgoing administration. This ship also has great hereditary value, having more "Royalty Slept Here" plaques than any other known vessel.

One ex-governor of Hong Kong, answers to name of Chris. Would make ideal MP, or future prime minister, or anything, really. If not snapped up at auction, will probably spend declining years fighting Britain's antiquated quarantine regulations.

Hundreds of miles of red, white and blue bunting, suitable for international matches, new petrol stations, Ye Olde Village Fayres, etc.

Thousands of CDs of Hong Kong police band playing Elgar, Holst, Gilbert and Sullivan, etc.

Thousands of labels reading "Made in Hong Kong" and marked with Union Jack.

Hundreds of posters reading "You Are Now Leaving Communist China", "Welcome To The Free World", "Political Refugees Will Be Returned To Red China, Sorry About That", etc.

Thousands of pictures of HM the Queen in serious mood.

Nostalgic set of framed pictures of Bath, none later than 1992.

Complete set of plans for the millennium, entitled: "What To Do In The Year 2000 If For Some Reason The Chinese Don't Want The Place Back".

Letter from Michael Heseltine, same date, saying: "Dear Chris, John really thinks we are going to win election. Well, he may be right, but something tells me that very soon we shall be looking for a new Tory leader. It will be me, of course, but shortly thereafter I shall be putting together my shadow cabinet, say no more, say no more..."

Letter from William Hague, later date in 1997, saying: "Dear Mr Patten, Although I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, I am writing to say that if you had a letter recently from Michael Heseltine giving the impression that he is to be the next Tory leader, he was in fact giving a false impression. Do get in touch when you get back from Hong Kong. I want to talk to you about a safe Tory seat, or, if there turns out to be no such thing, a possible post in Gibraltar."

Plus thousands of other items: red double-deckers, old Morris Minors, etc.

Everything must go, rather than get given back to China.

Send for full list now.



Miles Kington

original pristine condition... (This, incidentally, was a major stumbling-block in the hand-over negotiations. The British pointed out that they had to hand Hong Kong back to the Emperor, not a bunch of Communists. The Chinese government said that Hong Kong was not in its original good condition, being covered with a whole stack of skyscrapers which would all have to come down. Both sides relented at the last moment.)

One set of plumed hats, ceremonial sword, uniform, belt, etc, as worn by outgoing governor. Suitable for dressing up, amateur dramatics, etc.

One set of unique letters written to Chris Patten in the last five years, including: Letter from Margaret Thatcher, 1992, saying, "Dear Chris, Sorry about Bath, all my fault, should never have made you take can for poll tax, I am so very sorry, if you ever want VIP lectures in Hong Kong, just contact my agent..."

Letter from John Major, 1997, saying: "Dear Chris, Might well be a job for you in the new cabinet when you get back from Hong Kong!"

Letter from Michael Heseltine, same date, saying: "Dear Chris, John really thinks we are going to win election. Well, he may be right, but something tells me that very soon we shall be looking for a new Tory leader. It will be me, of course, but shortly thereafter I shall be putting together my shadow cabinet, say no more, say no more..."

Letter from William Hague, later date in 1997, saying: "Dear Mr Patten, Although I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, I am writing to say that if you had a letter recently from Michael Heseltine giving the impression that he is to be the next Tory leader, he was in fact giving a false impression. Do get in touch when you get back from Hong Kong. I want to talk to you about a safe Tory seat, or, if there turns out to be no such thing, a possible post in Gibraltar."

Plus thousands of other items: red double-deckers, old Morris Minors, etc.

Everything must go, rather than get given back to China.

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هكذا من الأصل

The French could turn out to be heroes after all

It has been hard to pick up a paper in recent weeks without reading shrieks of cheerful horror about the dramatic left turn in French politics.

In this newspaper on Saturday the Nobel prize-winning novelist Mario Vargas Llosa was accusing the French of a fatal error, in seeking to pamper themselves with state-subsidised goodies rather than confronting the bitter sacrifices that are surely necessary in the dynamic modern world; and he hasn't been the only one. Even Blairites are crowing over their good fortune, whispering that for France to have elected Jospin is like Britain voting in Michael Foot. Fog in Channel, the headlines seem to say: France isolated.

It all sounds quite persuasive to an audience that has been through the Reagan-Thatcher austerity mill. In the Anglo-Saxon world, we pride ourselves on taking our medicine like men. A bit of social hardship is just what the doctor ordered. This doesn't even seem like a political idea any more: we think of it as simple common sense.

But what if we are wrong? Some of the pique at France's apparently reckless refusal to buy into the free-market logic of the Anglo-Saxon world seems inspired by nerves, or possibly even by envy. Some of it is historic, and relates to British smootiness at France's capitulation in the war. Yeah, yeah, we say: of course Paris is beautiful – and we all know why, don't we? It's because they didn't get blitzed, the bastards. Part of it stems from a profound gap in our moral-aesthetic approaches to life: we Anglo-Saxons are pretty convinced that life is a hard, uphill slog, not to be taken lightly; whereas the French, madly, seem to believe that it should be both comfortable and fun.

But what, damn their eyes, if they are right? What if their high-spirited, socially cohesive culture of fine food, long holidays, lovely trains and generous benefits can indeed be sustained? Britain and America certainly have a strong interest in hoping that this is not true: it would mean we had undertaken our own painful, on-your-bike transformations for nothing. It would mean we had been duped.

It isn't easy, in Britain, to hear anything clearly above all the eurobabble. We risk becoming fuddled by the diplomatic pieties of the debate over EMU. But it takes only a brief trip to France (which millions, this summer, will enjoy). The *Michelin Red Guide* to France is a reliable best-seller every July) to remind us that "Europe" is not a speculative idea, but a busy and various place that intersects at a thousand points. The planes, trains, and coaches that criss-cross the Alps aren't full of brainy technocrats carrying blueprints for federation in their laptops. They are full of restaurateurs heading for Burgundy in search of a reliable house red, engineers checking out a hydro-electric project, farmers travelling to a com-



Robert Winder

We think life should be a hard, uphill slog. French people believe it should be comfortable and fun

ference on new feeder systems, teachers on exchanges, battery salesmen doing the rounds, language students en route to Grenoble and Florence, and – most common of all – tourists like me in search of nothing more federal than sunshine, clean air, meadows vivid with blue gentians and a Matterhorn view.

One thing you can't hope noticing, if you travel (as I did) from Geneva airport to the Italian border, is that in the space of a one-hour drive you need Swiss francs, French francs and Italian lire for the motorway tolls. It makes you brood a bit on the single currency. It seems a pretty good wheeze. But otherwise, far beneath the macro-economic rhetoric of federalisation, the differences between the nations of Europe are (as everyone knows) dissolving fast.

In lounge-class Europe you can have a more-or-less identical cappuccino wherever you are, not to mention a similar ham 'n' cheese croissant and chunk of Swiss chocolate. You can listen to James Bond themes performed on South American pan-pipes in almost any hotel between Belfast and Istanbul.

It is possible that this rapid homogenisation of international taste has hit France harder than most. Of all the countries in Europe, it has most

successfully exported its lifestyle: it is one of its major products. There is hardly a sandwich bar, brasserie or department store in the West that does not advertise the huge French influence in our daily life. There is a price attached to this. Britons, at any rate, used to travel to France expecting to feel the kiss of a more refined way of life: better food, better clothes, better weather, better everything. And France still does France better than anyone else. But it also has supermarkets and muzak and out-of-town high-rises and no-go suburbs like anywhere else: it feels less singular now.

Which is why the present political experiment is so gripping. The French are determined to protect their culture. It looks foolhardy, Canuteish, even a touch reactionary; in the area of race relations, for instance, it has some unhappy ramifications. But it is a serious proposal. Isolationist reflexes have long been to the fore in the arts, though they risk seeming frayed and corny: when Jean-Luc Godard said that he needed only two ingredients to make a film – a miniskirt and a gun – he was giving the game away.

France's literature, too, is shunned by the rest of the world, to much gnashing of teeth in Paris (*"ils nous boycottent"*), precisely because it continues to be inspired by an ideal of introspection that other nationalities have little time for. The heroes and heroines of modern French literature tend to be neurotic and alone – the key emotion is solitude. France's quest may indeed be lonely and embattled, as it fights on alone. Wouldn't it be ironic if it ended up seeming heroic into the bargain?

How long can Blair wait for Sinn Fein?

by Donald Macintyre

The face, contorted with uncontrollable grief, of seven-year-old Louise Johnston, son of one of the two RUC men shot dead by the IRA in Lurgan, will be one of the enduring images of 1997. It moved Tony Blair, and the deep anger that it generated in Downing Street and around the world will underline a good deal of what he says when he makes a statement on Northern Ireland in the Commons tomorrow. Blair is unlikely to mince his words about the gruesome cynicism of murdering the two policemen only 48 hours after republicans had been promised they could join all-party talks within six weeks if the IRA declared a ceasefire.

A moment of truth is fast approaching for the Provisionals. If they commit this atrocity in the midst of a detailed negotiating process about the terms needed to bring Sinn Fein into inclusive, all-party talks, what is the point of talking to them? For it suggests one of two deeply unpalatable possibilities: either that Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness have been guilty of mind-boggling hypocrisy in their negotiations with officials at the Northern Ireland Office, or that they are not in control of their own people. Either way it raises distinct doubts as to whether there is any point in the Government trying to bring them into talks.

Some of those doubts will surely be reflected in what the Prime Minister says tomorrow. He is after all, entitled to emphasise how the murders took place at a time when he had taken significant risks to secure a ceasefire. He had already abandoned the requirement, successfully pressed on his predecessor by the Ulster Unionists and consistently rejected by Sinn Fein, that there would have to be a symbolic hand-over of arms before inclusive talks could start.

Yesterday London and Dublin agreed a joint de-commissioning paper, several weeks in the drafting, to be issued to the inter-party talks in Belfast today. There has been a broad measure of agreement between London and the incoming government in Dublin in favour of the recommendations of Senator George Mitchell that de-commissioning should start happening only as the talks make progress. The Government has a huge majority, and is not, therefore, as the previous one was, held parliamentary prisoner by the Ulster Unionists. It is in a honey-



The grieving family of murdered RUC constable David Johnston at his funeral John Gies/PA

Either Adams and McGuinness are guilty of hypocrisy in their negotiations, or they are not in control of their own people

moon period. It has a leader who has striven for a new start, as McGuinness acknowledged on Sunday. When are the republicans going to have an opportunity like this again?

If the IRA doesn't think (and it may not) that that's a real question, it should think again. For it's becoming clearer by the day that Blair and Mo Mowlam, his Northern Ireland Secretary, are serious when they say that if talks can't be held which include Sinn Fein, then the Government will switch its energy to promoting talks that don't. Blair and Dr Mowlam

want a ceasefire. But they aren't, in the end, going to be deterred from trying to get the best out of the only alternative: talks between the existing constitutional parties.

True, there is deep and justified scepticism among the best informed in Northern Ireland about whether talks without Sinn Fein would be, in the phrase of Fergus Finlay, adviser to the outgoing Irish Foreign Minister, Dick Spring, "worth a penny candle". On an optimistic scenario, John Hume, leader of the nationalist SDLP, and David Trimble, leader of

the Ulster Unionists, would come together and agree terms for a new, power-sharing Northern Ireland assembly, along with some version of the institutional cross-border co-operation envisaged in the widely forgotten 1995 Framework Document.

Dublin would abandon the claim to sovereignty over Northern Ireland in Article II of the Irish constitution. The deal would be put successfully to referendums in both north and south next May. And the IRA would find itself not only militarily at bay, but with less

public support than at any time since the Troubles began. In your dreams, say the sceptics.

A conflagration after Drumcree in a fortnight's time would simply reinforce the hatreds between nationalists and Unionists rekindled by the one last year. Even without it, Hume would have to detach himself from his five-year quest to bring Sinn Fein into talks; and Trimble would have to take the bold step of facing down extreme Unionist opinion (in the rival DUP and in his own party) by conceding even the modest ground he has stubbornly refused to concede so far. And the DUP itself would have to be ignored. There are signs that some within the SDLP, including the deputy leader, Seamus Mallon, are less determined on having Sinn Fein in the talks than Hume himself. But the obstacles remain daunting.

The scepticism is quite widely shared in government. But Blair is still likely to make it clear that there is a limit to his patience with Sinn Fein, not least the widespread revulsion over Lurgan throughout Ireland. But the most important reason is the new relationship with President Clinton, further cemented at Denver at the weekend. Clinton has gone out of his way to use similar language to the Prime Minister in the wake of the Lurgan murders. This can only educate US opinion. The emptiness, for example, of the obscene parallel beloved of Sinn Fein leaders, between the IRA and the ANC in apartheid South Africa, has never been understood as well as now. There has probably never been a better chance that Clinton would back Blair, and, more important, still help to persuade the new government in Dublin to back Blair, if he decided there were no further point in trying to entice Sinn Fein/IRA into talks.

The immediate crisis facing Northern Ireland is the marching season, and the threat of disorder, on the scale of last year's, arising from Drumcree on 6 July. Dr Mowlam has just won plaudits on both sides of the border for her heroic efforts to secure a local agreement to prevent that happening. But she has an uphill struggle on her hands. Any new effort at kick-starting fresh negotiations will no doubt now have to wait until September. So this may provide Sinn Fein with another opportunity. The new Prime Minister has been over backwards to bring them in. But he will not bend for ever.

Good riddance, Mr Darcy

Glenda Cooper bids a painful farewell to the star of her fantasies

"Look, it's not real you know," said an exasperated male friend yesterday. "I mean all this Darcy/Austen stuff. It's only a book."

To me, that sums up how blind men are.

As the BBC prepares to re-screen *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr Darcy in his Colin Firth incarnation has gone and got married, not to Elizabeth Bennet but to a perfectly horrible 24-year-old Italian student called Livia Giuggioli. I hope he enjoyed the ceremony because it's the last time he'll be seen in a starring role for some time. Certainly in my fantasies.

The illusion about the "all-fencing, all-swimming, all-talking-a-bath" Darcy has finally been shattered. He is no longer available and therefore he is no longer attractive.

Cursory knowledge of Austen means you just can't just over a married Mr Darcy – particularly one hitched to a woman young enough to worry about not being taken seriously. The sex appeal has vanished and the Arsenal boxer shorts of *Fever Pitch*, the boricness of *Nostromo* and the nonentity in the *English Patient* have blighted the allure of Firth-Darcy for ever.

It is hard to believe that less than two years ago Darcythania was so great that rational adult women stayed in watching television on six consecutive Sunday nights. That 12,000 bought the video within two hours of its release. That we had our Darcy parties (watching the five-and-a-half-hour videos with special pauses and rewinds around the Darcy dip – yes you do remember it, don't pretend – the bit where he dives into the lake), the Darcy walks, Darcy weekends, and *Pride and Prejudice* balls.

It's easy to be snotty now but even the high-minded *Woman's Hour* invited him on for reasons that were given simply as "lust". *The Times* was thanked over and over by grateful female readers for consistently reproducing pictures of Mr Darcy.



Not a dripping torso in sight: Colin Firth with Livia Giuggioli

Even his breeches on show in a Suffolk museum had to be put under guard after girls persistently failed to abide by the Do Not Touch signs.

I didn't like mentioning it at the time, of course, but Firth as Darcy had some flaws from the start. We managed to ignore the young son with Meg Tilly (all over and done with pre-Darcy) and the affair with his co-star, Jennifer Ehle (somehow it seemed right; anyone who could see Mr Darcy in those breeches in the flesh would want to do nothing but get him out of them as soon as possible).

But we have been betrayed. We did all this for a man who can now bleat: "It is the happiest day of our lives. I am the happiest man in Italy and she is the happiest girl." Hardly an epigram worthy of Austen. Then apparently both bride and groom were so overcome by the romance of the moment that they burst into tears. Yuck, yuck and triple yuck. Mr Darcy doesn't cry.

In Andrew Davies's version, Fitzwilliam Darcy was more than just a beefcake in

breeches to most women, although as Firth once commented, "Darcy's just an animal". But he was an ideal posh bit of stuff with a large house, good taste and a fine line in smouldering glances. He was the ideal of what a man should be – a good-looking hero who finally got in touch with his emotions and fixed everything so efficiently that you knew you'd never have a problem getting a table in a restaurant. He was the sort of man who would see the best in you and not fall for very young and attractive foreign women. And he was just damn sexy – which isn't always a quality you associate with New Man. Feminism might not have delivered all we hoped for, men might still be from Mars and women from Venus, but Mr Darcy in a clinging shirt made up for all those dark November evenings.

Married, he is hardly likely to be jumping in and out of lakes in a wet shirt for our benefit – just changing the kids' wet nappies. He'll never take a bath in front of 10 million people again. And instead of Pemberley he's living in a flat yards from his parents.

Firth has tried to escape from the Darcy model in the past. "I felt like a drug dealer who doesn't get high on his own supply. I'll peddle the stuff but won't use it. All I did was put on a costume and act," he whinged. Yeah right, but he's not above acting as Mr Darcy in real life when it serves his own advantage. Yesterday the bride's mother gushed: "My daughter has married an admirable English gentleman who treated his fiancée with the greatest of respect. In Rome, Colin would always bring my daughter back before 11pm and he would sleep in a hotel." If that's not Mr Darcy behaviour (if slightly boring), I don't know what is.

"All that smouldering. Lots of people told me not to do it and said everyone would get sick of me." I never thought I'd say it but I am. Come back when you're single, Colin. But bring the wet shirt, too.

OBE? Thanks, but no thanks

Britain's honours system does not bring honour. It is secretive and seductive. It selects on ill-defined criteria. It is meretricious, redolent with the aroma of an aristocratic legend. I was offered and refused the OBE in 1993. I tried to discover who had recommended me, but this is "confidential". It was for "services to education": I had been head of a comprehensive school for 13 years. So little did my nominator know about me that the Prime Minister's letter informing me of my recommendation was sent to another JD Anderson in the same area. Had he not been honest, he could quite easily have received an OBE for services he had never rendered. I wonder if this has ever happened before?

Mr Major had a policy of open government. Yet clear criteria for receiving an honour are nowhere publicly stated. The most that has been said is that they should be given for "merit", and particularly for voluntary service. How can a citizen, with sound reasons, agree or disagree on who does or who does not receive an honour when the whole process is shrouded in obfuscation?

I cannot agree with a system that rewards people who have made themselves known to the "right people" – who may then recommend them for an honour. I happen to have been to Cambridge in Rotary, an active churchman, and a fairly high-profile headteacher. I know several school heads who have successfully done far more difficult jobs than mine. None has an OBE. I doubt if they all refused them.

The graduation of honours, OBE for heads of an officer class and MBE for other ranks,

illustrates what is wrong with our layered society. The Ruritanian seeking of distinctions and the trappings of class and privilege were well satirised as the little people of Lilliput by Swift 250 years ago; they have increased in number ever since.

The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire may have made sense when there was a British Empire consisting of more than a few rocky remnants. Since I have always supported the dismantling of the Empire in favour of a true Commonwealth, I could hardly be an "officer" of the former. The name of the order is now utterly outdated. For me, OBE stands for Obsolete British Emblem.

Societies such as the USA succeed well enough without an honours system. We do not need honours to reward success. I would argue that the intrinsic feeling of self-fulfilment of successful people is quite sufficient. A letter from the Prime Minister thanking a citizen for their services would be far more acceptable to many. It would also reduce the cynicism about some honours for those who put time into charitable work.

I would urge the Government to examine critically this symbol of Britain as a heritage theme park. I would urge others who agree, especially if they have refused "honours", to write to me so that we can press Labour to bring to birth a new Britain where morality, skill and hard work are rewarded by honour, not "honours".

The writer can be contacted at 1 Gillbeck Close, Baildon, Shipley, Yorkshire BD17 6TT.

John D Anderson

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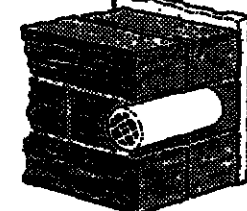
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Blow to troubled retailer as ex-Post Office chief moves to run telecoms giant's UK business

Cockburn quits
WH Smith to
take up BT offerNigel Cope
City Correspondent

Shareholders in the troubled WH Smith retailing group were dealt a fresh blow yesterday when Bill Cockburn announced he was quitting as chief executive after just 18 months in the job. Mr Cockburn will leave in October to become managing director at BT, where he will run the telecoms giant's UK business.

WH Smith shares fell 35p to 378.5p, their lowest since autumn 1995, as analysts fretted about the implications of the sudden resignation. They said the company might experience a period of drift and a new chief executive might introduce a different strategy, causing yet more disruption.

Mr Cockburn, 54, described the BT job as an "irresistible" opportunity. The bustling Scot started his career in the telephone side of the post office in 1961 so it represents a kind of homecoming. "What an offer," he said. "I didn't seek it. The phone rang two weeks ago and it was Peter Bonfield [BT chief executive]. These opportunities don't come along very often."

However, City analysts and some WH Smith workers criticised Mr Cockburn, saying he was leaving too soon, less than half way through his "four-year plan".

Nick Bubb, retail analyst at Société Générale Strauss Turbulla, said: "Bill Cockburn's honey-

moon period had just about ended. He had done all the obvious things such as cutting costs and arranging disposals. But the attention was starting to turn to the absence of sales growth."

Mr Bubb said there had been "a few uneasy feelings" emanating from WH Smith recently as the group continued to wrestle with problems in its core retail chain, hit by slow sales and competition from the big supermarkets. There has been a raft of staff departures with rumblings of discontent about Mr Cockburn's heavy-handed management style.

"The style has been a bruising one but it has cleared the decks," said one WH Smith source. "What the man was good at was cost control. The questions were about how good he would be at building on the foundations. The business now needs someone who has strategic vision."

One former executive said: "He didn't really grasp the intricacies of retailing. He grasped the nettle on some of the old WH Smith practices and he has done a bit of company doctoring. Maybe it is time to hand it back to a real retailer."

Since joining the company in January 1996, Mr Cockburn has sold Smith's 50 per cent stake in Do It All to Boots, sold the business supplies division and a host of smaller companies.

Jeremy Hardie, the WH Smith chairman who recruited

Mr Cockburn from the Post Office, said yesterday: "I obviously wanted Bill to stay longer. But it was a knockout offer so it is not surprising that he was keen to take it. He has done a great deal, sorted out the portfolio and got the right people in to the business."

Mr Cockburn denied he was being disloyal to Mr Hardie and to WH Smith investors. "I really do believe the business is in better shape than it was when I arrived. If I had not felt that I wouldn't have gone."

Attention will now turn to who will replace him in one of retailing's most difficult jobs. Internal candidates include Keith Hamill, finance director, Richard Handover, managing director of the newspaper wholesaling operation, John Hancock, chief executive of the American businesses, and Alan Giles, who runs both Waterstones and the Virgin-Our Price joint venture. A headhunter has been appointed to trawl for external candidates.

In a trading statement released yesterday, WH Smith said same-store sales were up by 3 per cent in the second half.

BT would not confirm Mr Cockburn's salary in his new role. However, it is likely to be considerably more than the £425,000 he received at WH Smith last year.

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Bruiser: Bill Cockburn's heavy-handed management style led to rumblings of discontent at WH Smith, but he also faces criticism from some quarters for leaving the ailing retailer too soon. Photograph: Edward Sykes

Tobacco
deal in US
may speed
BAT into
demerger

Sameena Ahmad

The demerger of BAT's financial services business from the tobacco side now looks more likely following the \$368bn (£221bn) settlement of US tobacco litigation announced last Friday.

Analysts said that if the legislation was approved by US Congress in its current form, pressure on BAT to demerge would grow, although Martin Broughton, BAT's chairman, said that the settlement had "no impact" on the company's thinking on the demerger issue.

"If we wanted to demerge we could do it now," he added.

Paul Hodges, tobacco analyst at Schroders, said: "The threat of legal challenge would have made it very hard for BAT to demerge the financial side. Healthcare lobbyists would have said they were trying to protect their assets. Settlement must make demerger more of a reality."

Another analyst said that a settlement would leave BAT free to concentrate on an acquisition in financial services side, which would almost certainly trigger a demerger.

The comments accompanied strong denials by the industry and analysts that there would be a similar wave of litigation in the UK as in the US. Shares in UK tobacco companies took a drubbing yesterday over fears of a spread of litigation.

Mary Day, the solicitor organising a £5m test case by 47 lung cancer victims against Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco - which sell 80 per cent of the \$3 billion cigarettes sold in the UK each year - said: "I expect to see cases cropping up all across Europe."

Mr Day who will try to persuade a judge to take on the case on 1 July said: "If we win the generic argument that tobacco companies failed in their duty of care to make cigarettes safe, then the whole litigation market here will open up."

BAT's shares closed 21.5p down at 567.5p. Gallaher fell 18p to 282p while Imperial finished 13.5p lower at 407p.

However, analysts said there were important differences between the UK and US situations.

Nyren Scott Malden, of brokers BZW, said that UK taxes on tobacco companies were considerably higher than in the US, where the excise duty was one of the lowest in the world: "UK companies pay £10.5bn to the exchequer in cigarette taxes compared to £8.5bn in the US, where the market is six times bigger."

Jonathan Fell, tobacco analyst at Merrill Lynch pointed out that at the same time as lower tobacco taxes, annual smoking-related healthcare costs in the US were a staggering \$50bn a year, dwarfing the UK's £750m bill. "Tax revenues from tobacco pay for a decent size chunk of all the UK's healthcare needs, whereas they don't even cover smoking related costs in the US. Anti-tobacco groups here are bound to try and use this settlement to get public support, but it is hard to see how the argument would work."

Nick Butler, tobacco expert at stockbrokers James Capel said that there was much less incentive to litigate in the UK. Unlike in the US, solicitors here are not entitled to what can be a lucrative share of damages. Moreover, litigants suing in the UK are liable to pay compensation to tobacco companies if they lose and cannot sue for punitive damages, which again can be substantial. Instead they are limited to claims against personal injury or economic loss.

Railtrack on
course for
watchdog row

Andrew Yates

Railtrack is facing a head-on clash with John Swift, the rail regulator, when the two parties hold a crunch meeting on Thursday concerning the company's proposed £16bn, 10-year investment programme for Britain's railway network.

If the company does not make a U-turn by agreeing to alter its licence to include watertight promises to deliver on its spending commitments, then Mr Swift is intent on hauling Railtrack before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

"All we want to do is make Railtrack deliver on its promises and put its money where its mouth is. We are calling them in to explain why they do not want to change their licence. This is a crucial meeting. If their answers do not satisfy us then we will act quickly," said a spokesman for the rail watchdog.

Mr Swift believes tighter regulation is necessary to ensure Railtrack spends the £2bn it receives a year from the public purse is spent judiciously.

But Railtrack shows no signs of giving an inch in the delicate negotiations and refuses to accept it has to increase its accountability to the Rail Regulator. "We have no intention of changing our position and changing our operating licence," a Railtrack spokesman said yesterday. Last week Railtrack's chairman, Sir Bob Horton, claimed that any changes to its licence would lead to

"more bureaucracy, second-guessing of decisions and a loss of flexibility."

That argument got short shrift from Mr Swift. He said recently: "I remain of the belief that it is appropriate to increase Railtrack's accountability in the way I am proposing and do not believe that it would lead to the detriments suggested by Railtrack."

The Government is supportive of the rail regulator's stance and will probably summon Railtrack to explain its actions if it still refuses to accept his demands. John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, recently met Sir Bob to discuss his concerns over its investment shortfall. Mr Prescott is determined to make sure that Railtrack delivers on its promises. He told delegates at a conference for the Aslef train workers' union in Torquay last Friday that the regulation of the railways needed to be tightened.

"Railtrack is seemingly rejecting a voluntary improvement in its contract to give the regulator tighter powers with respect to providing investment. I would emphasise that unless a satisfactory agreement is reached then the whole question of how Railtrack is regulated will be opened up once more," he said.

"The Government has no specific plans to see Railtrack again at the moment. But we will be very interested in the feedback coming from that meeting," a Department of Transport spokesman said yesterday.

BDB tipped to emerge as digital winner

Cathy Newman

Analysts are gambling that British Digital Broadcasting, the consortium involving BSkyB, Carlton Communications and Granada Group, will today win at least one, and possibly all three of the licences for digital terrestrial television in the UK.

The Independent Television Commission said yesterday it had all the information it needed and would announce the licence awards today.

However, as a condition of awarding the licence Sky, the satellite broadcaster, last week had to drop its equity stake in BDB over competition worries. The new deal allows Sky to supply programming to BDB, and gives the company a £75m rebate for losing its equity stake. Carlton and Granada are to share Sky's stake, at a cost of £50m each.

Sources said yesterday that European competition authorities had intervened over Sky's stake in BDB only after Digital

Television Network (DTN), the rival bidder for the terrestrial multiplexes, lobbied the European Commission over its concerns about Sky's presence in the consortium.

The satellite operator had been expected to make a public announcement about the terms of the deal with BDB yesterday morning. However, when news failed to emerge, analysts speculated that a statement would coincide with today's licence awards by the ITC.

Although some City analysts

had worried that the ITC would fudge the issue by splitting the licences, most said the timing of the ITC's announcement might mean that BDB had won all three licences.

Jason Crisp, media analyst at Société Générale Strauss Turbulla, said: "If you were going to bet on it, you'd have to choose BDB. But you can't rule out a split."

Mathew Horsman, media analyst at Henderson Crosthwaite, said: "The timing's too suspect. It may be a split award but BDB

will be in the picture somewhere. If not, the ITC will have a lot to answer for, having put BDB through the expense and hard work of rejigging their bid."

Observers continued to express the view that, whatever the outcome of the ITC's deliberations, the watchdog was likely to be threatened with court action. Anthony de Larrinaga, media analyst at Panmure Gordon, said DTN could use legal action to try to gain licences if it failed to win any of the three multiplexes.

PFI overhaul gets
business backing

Michael Harrison

The Government's overhaul of the Private Finance Initiative, which will see a new £150,000-a-year chief executive drafted into the Treasury to run the programme, received strong backing across business yesterday.

The sweeping reforms will result in the Private Finance Panel and its 25-strong executive being disbanded and replaced by a nine-strong Treasury taskforce recruited from the private sector and reporting directly to the Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson.

The taskforce, to be headed by a chief executive with project experience, will be responsible for approving all Whitehall PFI schemes before they are let to private operators and will run for two years.

Other changes include limiting the number of bidders on each project to four and paying the private sector's bid costs where PFI projects are withdrawn by the Government. There will also be a greater role

for the private finance units within government departments.

As details of the review emerged, legislation which will pave the way for the launch of PFI schemes in education including the building of entire schools, received its second reading in the Commons.

The Local Government Contracts Bill is expected to enter force in November and will give local authorities the right to enter into PFI projects with private backers to build schools, fire stations, libraries and local roads.

Similar legislation is being introduced in the health sector after fears among private financiers about whether NHS hospital trusts had the legal authority to enter into PFI contracts.

Mr Robinson said that health and education would be the Government's two priority areas. It is aiming to finance £14bn worth of public sector capital projects through the PFI by the end of the next financial year.

The reforms stem from a one-month review conducted by Malcolm Bates, a former deputy



Geoffrey Robinson outlined health and education plans

managing director of GEC and now chairman of Pearl Assurance and Premier Farnell.

Mr Bates said he was confident that the private sector would welcome the changes, which are designed to speed up the flow of PFI deals. So far more than 60 projects valued at £6.9bn have been financed under the PFI but the Channel Tunnel Rail Link accounts for nearly half this total.

The Confederation of British Industry welcomed the overhaul. Charles Cox, the chairman of its PFI committee, said: "Today's announcement is what business wanted to hear. The focus on immediate action is particularly welcome."

Shareholder threat to
Tunnel refinancing

Eurotunnel is facing a cliff-hanger of a vote to get its financial restructuring proposals approved by shareholders next month and avoid the threat of being put into insolvency, writes Michael Harrison.

French investor groups representing disgruntled Eurotunnel shareholders believe they are now close to gathering enough support to vote down the refinancing at a crucial extraordinary meeting on 10 July.

The groups estimate they will need around 57 million votes to block the restructuring, under which the banks will swap £2bn of their £8.7bn in debt for a stake of up to 61 per cent in Eurotunnel. Under certain circumstances, the banks could emerge with 75 per cent of the equity.

One of the shareholder groups is led by Sophie L'Hellias, who says she has the support of 40 million votes for her demand that the banks cancel 25 per cent of their debt and allow Eurotunnel to issue a new category of shares to existing shareholders to improve their

lot. The other two groups - Adacte and the Association of Eurotunnel Shareholders - claim to speak for about 20 million votes.

Privately Eurotunnel executives are pleased that the three groups are collecting proxies because one of the biggest challenges will be to get a quorum at the meeting - 25 per cent of shareholders need to be represented for it to go ahead.

They believe that if Eurotunnel can wring an extension to its concession out of the British and French governments this will be enough to swing support behind the refinancing.

Eurotunnel has warned that if shareholders vote down the plan it will probably have to file for bankruptcy although the shareholder groups contest this. Its 174-strong banking syndicate, which also needs to approve the refinancing, would probably press for the right to substitute Eurotunnel with new management rather than see it pass into the control of a French bankruptcy court.

STOCK MARKETS

FTSE 100

Month	Index Value
January	4500
February	4600
March	4550
April	4700
May	4750
June	4780

FTSE100 Statistics June

Indices

Index	Close	Week's chg	Change(%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	4593.90	-189.2	-4.0	4783.10	4056.80	3.58
FTSE 250	4495.00	-101.1	-2.2	4729.40	4462.00	3.65
FTSE 350	2229.10	-83.7	-3.6	2312.80	2017.90	3.59
FTSE SmallCap	2261.09	-27.4	-1.2	2374.20	2178.29	3.14
FTSE All-Share	2187.93	-76.2	-3.4	2286.11	1988.76	3.56
New York	7739.51	+19.45	+0.25	7796.51	5032.94	1.64
Tokyo	20395.54	-142.8	-0.7	20881.07	17303.85	0.731
Hong Kong	15154.36	+1041.8	+7.4	15154.36	12055.17	2.961
Frankfurt	3788.27	+43.8	+1.2	3788.27	2848.77	1.451

Statistics as of 23 June

INTEREST RATES									
UK interest rates									
Benchmark yield curve (0-30 year gilt (%))									
1 Month	5.52	1 Year	7.12	2 Year	8.10	3 Year	7.19	5 Year	8.24
10 Year	5.72	15 Year	5.97	20 Year	6.88	25 Year	6.66	30 Year	7.05
3 Month	0.50	6 Month	0.86	9 Month	2.40	12 Month	3.26	18 Month	4.00
24 Month	3.06	36 Month	3.22	48 Month	5.73	60 Month	6.61	72 Month	6.52
Bond Yields *									
Index	1 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	5 Year	10 Year	15 Year	20 Year	30 Year
UK	6.53	7.12	7.13	8.10	7.19	8.24			
US	5.72	5.97	6.38	6.88	6.66	7.05			
Japan	0.50	0.86	2.40	3.26	4.00	4.00			
Germany	3.06	3.22	5.73	6.61	6.52				
MAIN PRICE CHANGES									
Rises - Top 3	Price (p)	UK's Chg (p)	% Chg	Falls - Top 3	Price (p)	UK's Chg (p)	% Chg		
7.8 N	153.5	15.5	11.2	Petrol	402.5	102.5	20.3		
Man (E.D.F.)	203.5	17.5	9.4	British Sky Broad	497.5	98	19.5		
Senior Engineering	141.5	10	7.6	Body Shop Ind	157	20.5	11.5		

CURRENCIES

\$/£

Month	Rate
J	1.65
F	1.64
M	1.63
A	1.62
M	1.63
J	1.64
J	1.65
A	1.64
S	1.63
O	1.62
N	1.63
D	1.64
J	1.65

\$/DM

Month	Rate
J	2.65
F	2.66
M	2.67
A	2.68
M	2.69
J	2.70
J	2.71
A	2.72
S	2.73
O	2.74
N	2.75
D	2.76
J	2.85

Pound vs.

	Close	Week's chg	Yr Ago
\$ (London)	1.6540	+1.85p	1.5415
\$ (N York)	1.6565	+2.1c	1.5382
DM (London)	2.8848	+2.27p	2.8500
¥ (London)	188.648	+Y2.062	166.860
€ Index	101.2	+0.9	85.7

Dollar vs.

	Close	Week's chg	Yr Ago
£ (London)	0.6048	-0.08	0.6487
£ (N York)	0.6037	-0.77	0.6497
DM (London)	1.7321	-0.57p	1.5244
¥ (London)	114.960	-Y0.040	106.240
€ Index	102.8	unch	98.9

OTHER INDICATORS

	Close	Week's chg	Yr Ago	Index	Latest	Yr Ago	Next Figs
Oil Brent \$	17.43	-2.24	18.26	RPI	156.9	+0.38p	150.9 8 Jul
Gold \$	338.45	-3.1	384.30	GDP	109.7	+2.6p	107.0 25 Jul
Gold £	204.63	-4.03	249.35	Base Rates	-	6.50p	6.75

News Corp's sports
channels to cover US

News Corporation, run by Rupert Murdoch, and Telecommunications of the US are to pay \$850m (£510m) for a 40 per cent stake in Cablevision Corp's sports TV business to create a national US chain of cable-television sports channels.

News Corp and TC already own nine regional cable networks, called Fox Sports, through their Fox/Liberty Networks venture. Cablevision's Madison Square Garden subsidiary owns the MSG Network, seven regional networks called SportsChannel and the New York Knicks basketball team.

Linking the channels will help the three companies compete with Walt Disney's ESPN, the biggest American sports channel. Analysts expect the deal to launch News Corp and TC into the prime media markets of New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

"Fans will continue to get their home teams, now along with the great national sports programming supplied by Fox Sports Net," said David Hill, chief executive of Fox/Liberty Networks. The combined chain of 17 channels will reach about 55 million homes.

كلنا من الأصل

No excuses, Cockburn has let everyone down



COMMENT

The star culture of professional sport seems to have infected not just the City but the boardroom too. In business as in football, it seems all the benefit of the system now lies with the "star" name and very little with the organisation paying the wages.

Bill Cockburn is all misty-eyed at the prospect of returning to his roots at good old BT, but there are a fair few others rather less impressed with his behaviour. Shareholders in WH Smith for a start. They were promised all sorts of new beginnings when Mr Cockburn was brought in 18 months ago, and for a while the shares were borne aloft by recovery prospects. The skids have been under them again for a while now as the market began to realise that returning fuddy-duddy old WH Smith to its former glories was a tougher job than Mr Cockburn had perhaps imagined.

Then there are the WH Smith staff. They have had this burly Scot berating them about a culture of excuses only to see him quit less than half way through his four-year grand plan because he has got himself a better job. Mr Cockburn has caused a huge amount of disruption since he's been there. Fair enough if you are going to see at through, but to walk out with everything in such a mess? Tut, tut. Jeremy Hardie, the WH Smith chairman, must also feel he has been legged over. He plucked Mr Cockburn from the relative backwater of the Royal Mail and gave him one of Britain's most high-profile retailers to manage. Now he must start his search all over again. It all looks rather shabby.

Mr Cockburn can talk all he likes of "irresistible offers and chances of a lifetime", but this is actually just a piece of rampant disloyalty. The star culture of professional sport seems to have infected not just the City, but the boardroom too. In business as in foot-

ball, it seems all the benefit of the system now lies with the "star" name and very little with the organisation paying the wages. Mr Cockburn was talking a good game yesterday about his reasons for going - massive company, BT couldn't resist it, old boy. The truth of the matter is that he has let everyone down. BT's chief executive, Sir Peter Bonfield, should perhaps be taking note of this old American adage: "Quitters never win". Just who does he think he's employing?

Kiss of life once more for the PFI

And here's to you Mr Robinson, Tarmac loses you more than you can know... The resurrection of the Private Finance Initiative has become an annual event in the political calendar. Yesterday it was the turn of Labour's new Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson, to apply the cardiac shock pads, nursed by Malcolm Bates, former deputy managing director of GEC.

Norman Lamont, who invented the PFI, tried giving it the kiss of life on several occasions and Kenneth Clarke did likewise, all to no avail. So the obvious question is why should Mr Robinson fare any better.

Already he has cleared away one of the hurdles to getting deals done - that every piece of Whitehall capital spending has to be tested against the PFI before being sanctioned. There were some more hopeful

pointers in the reforms unveiled yesterday, linking the PFI back under direct Treasury control might seem like an invitation for bureaucratic meddling. But provided the new chief executive he is bringing in from outside to run the taskforce is given his head then the gamble might just pay off.

Limiting tender lists to four bidders and allowing the private sector to recoup its bidding costs where the Government pulls the rug from under projects should also tempt a few more private operators into the water.

But the biggest problem for the PFI is the way it has become an integral part of the public spending control total. Mr Robinson has inherited a target of getting £14bn worth of public projects funded through the PFI by the end of the next financial year. The schemes he wants to see come to fruition - new schools and libraries for instance - are not necessarily the ones that the private sector wishes to finance, except at rates of return which throw the whole concept of the PFI into question. Mr Robinson has, perhaps unwisely, staked his reputation on making the PFI work. As the song also says, heaven holds a place for those who pray.

The economic case in favour of smoking

Over the years the role played by Professor Richard Doll in discouraging people from smoking has perhaps been as great as

any. It was he who originally discovered the medical link between lung cancer and tobacco, though it had long been suspected.

Unlike many others in the anti smoking lobby, however, he has never tried to argue the economic case against tobacco. There's not much point because in Britain at least, tobacco wins hands down, so much so that the Government should on economic grounds alone be positively encouraging smoking as a force for good in our society and giving the industry carte blanche to advertise as much as it wants.

This is not just because in Britain, unlike the US, the tax take on tobacco far exceeds the National Health Service's estimated expenditure on treating tobacco-related disease. In fact this doesn't really count as an argument in favour of the industry, for the effect of tobacco tax is like any other tax on consumption - it merely redistributes revenue from those who smoke to those who don't.

No, the real economic benefit of smoking - sorry to put it so crudely - is that tobacco kills people early. The proportion of a smoker's life taken up by unproductive, dependent existence, is therefore generally rather smaller than that of a non smoker. Certainly the health care costs over a lifetime of smokers is on average lower than non smokers, if only because smokers do not tend to live into an expensive dotage.

So please, let's not hear any more about the costs of smoking. In fact the costs are

all the other way round. Society at large will end up paying through the nose for a less tobacco dependent society.

Barclays won't be allowed near NatWest

Did Barclays Bank deny that it was considering a bid for National Westminster Bank at the weekend or didn't it? Certainly its answers to the question were ambiguous enough to leave room for doubt. The possibility was not completely ruled out.

However, this is a bit like asking the BBC whether it would like to take over ITV. Of course it would. Who wouldn't like to takeover the main competition? Whether it would be allowed to is a different thing.

The truth of the matter is that Barclays would do it if given the slightest opportunity. But even though NatWest last week issued a profits warning, is clearly in a state of some disarray, and the backdrop is for consolidation in the banking industry, it is hard to imagine it would ever get the chance.

Indeed the idea is so ridiculous, given that the combined group would have more than a half of small and medium sized business lending, not to mention the personal banking and credit card market, that not even the most fanciful of corporate strategists could seriously think it possible for more than a few seconds. NatWest may be for the wolves. But don't expect Barclays to be allowed a hand in it.

Reed nets US publisher for £268m

Cathy Newman

Reed Elsevier, the publisher and information provider, yesterday made its second big US purchase this year, and promised to tie up further deals of a similar size before the end of the year.

Reed is paying \$447m (£268m) in cash for Chilton Business Group, a business publisher currently owned by ABC, a subsidiary of the Walt Disney Company. But the company said it could afford another two acquisitions of a similar size before the year was out.

Reed secured the Chilton business after an auction which is thought to have included VNU Business Publications and United News & Media's Miller Freeman subsidiary.

Chilton, based in Pennsylvania, consists primarily of 39

business-to-business titles, which will be merged into Reed's Chilton Publishing Company to form Reed Elsevier Business Information. Chilton Research Services, a business research company, will also form part of this new division. Chilton's exhibitions business will be absorbed into Reed Exhibitions Companies.

Reed told analysts it was aiming to chop around \$10m in costs from the Chilton group within about a year. Mark Armour, Reed's chief financial officer, said the company would be identifying "considerable operational synergies" in the paper, distribution, circulation and services departments.

He admitted that some job losses were inevitable, but refused to be drawn on numbers, saying the company would re-

serve judgement on staff cuts. Analysts speculated that up to 100 positions could go.

Nigel Stapleton, co-chairman of Reed, said tax benefits would make the acquisition earnings-enhancing from the outset. He added that combining Chilton's operations with Reed's business information and exhibitions divisions would offer "opportunities for revenue growth and operational synergies".

City analysts said they were impressed but not overwhelmed by the deal, believing Reed had paid a fairly full price. Alastair Smellie, media analyst at ABN Amro Hoare Govett, said Reed could do a dozen similar-sized deals before the end of the year.

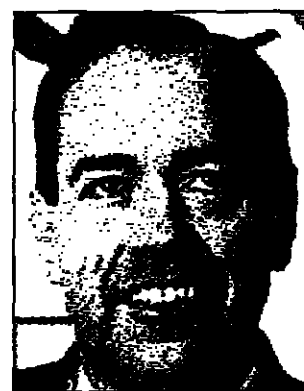
Derek Torrington, media analyst at Jefferies & Greenwood, was particularly positive about

the synergies between the two company's manufacturing and entertainment trade magazines. He added: "It's a very good deal. It's a classic publishing acquisition because of the good fit of the businesses."

Reed said yesterday that it had been working on plans to develop an on-line news and information service for the entertainment industry. The company said the purchase of Chilton's magazines had added momentum to this project.

Reed has been keen to accelerate its move into global electronic distribution, signing a deal with Microsoft in May which allowed it to put scientific, legal, business and travel information on the Internet.

Yesterday's acquisition was the second big US purchase this year. Reed bought MDL In-



Still looking: Nigel Stapleton, Reed co-chairman

formation Systems for \$320m earlier this year.

In the year to the end of December 1996, Chilton reported profits before tax of \$28m on revenues of \$203m.

Lonrho stays silent on outcome of JCI merger

Magnus Grimond

The outcome of merger talks between Lonrho and JCI, the first black-controlled South African mining house, should be known within a month or two, according to sources at the British-based mining to hotels group. But management is remaining silent on which way the discussions, revealed last month, will go. Nick Morrell, chief executive, said: "It is too early to say whether a merger is possible or likely. Talks are continuing but there is no commitment."

Other groups, including rival South African mining groups Avmin and Gencor, have been rumoured as bidders for Lonrho, which has acknowledged

that it has received more than one approach. However, it was playing down the seriousness of such contacts yesterday, saying it was in talks only with JCI. A spokesman said: "If someone makes an offer, then they have to consider it. It is not that they are soliciting offers."

The latest talks grew out of a plan put forward by JCI to merge the two group's South African coal interests, which lie next to each other, and developed into a proposal for a full-scale merger to create a company valued at around £2bn. Analysts said they would not be surprised if other bidders were interested, given the need for Lonrho to gain more critical mass in its platinum opera-

tions. But one said Gencor - least probably had enough of its plate with its plans to flee the Billiton non-precious metals interests in London.

Lonrho also appeared to dampen speculation that Angl American, the giant mining house, would pick up the Brits group's one-third stake in Ashanti, the Ghanaian mining house, in exchange for reducing its shareholding from 28 per cent, as required by a European Commission cartel ruling.

Lonrho revealed that pre-tax profits had slumped from £500 to £22m in the six months to March, a 38 per cent fall when exceptional items were stripped out.

Investment column, page 2

INDEPENDENT SHORT BREAKS

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London Gatwick airport is easily accessible by rail using the Gatwick Express service from London Victoria.

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AMSTERDAM

Due to its extensive network of canals Amsterdam is rightly regarded as the 'Venice of the North'. Visitors to Amsterdam will find a lively and cosmopolitan city equally well known for its liberal attitudes and red light district as for its priceless art collections, in particular the Van Gogh museum (which hosts three different versions of his priceless 'Sunflowers') and picture book architecture.



ANTWERP

Situated on the banks of the river Scheldt, Antwerp is Belgium's second city and one of Europe's busiest ports and home to a thriving diamond industry. Antwerp is characterised by its Baroque architecture and by the art of its most famous inhabitant Peter Paul Rubens. The world's most extensive collection of Rubens' work is in the Royal Museum. Belgium's cuisine is similar in style to French whilst the local beers are considered a speciality. Plus you can sample the delights of the famous beers at the many bars and cafes in a city where there are no licensing laws!

Hotel Lists

AMSTERDAM

Holland Hotel - 4 Star Superior - 2 nights from £189. Quality accommodation in a delightful location near the museum, best shopping streets and Amsterdam's largest park, the Vondelpark.

Terminus - 3 Star - 2 nights from £189. Good standard of accommodation, recently renovated. Situated between Dam Square and the Central station in a small side street on the edge of the red light district (not for families).

Avenue - 3 Star Superior - 2 nights from £145. A delightful hotel in the historic heart of Amsterdam. All rooms have been fully renovated. Superb location between Dam Square and the Central Station.

Singel Hotel - 3 Star Superior - 2 nights from £145. Housed within a completely renovated canal-side 17th century building, this hotel combines old fashioned charm with contemporary comfort. Picturesque location, very easy on foot access for all central Amsterdam.

Doelen - 4 Star - 2 nights from £145 until 31st July and £165 from 1st August. Historic Hotel, one of the oldest in the city. Right in the centre alongside the Amstel and Kloveniers canals. Typical Dutch Pub and 'Savarin' waterside restaurant. Quality accommodation in a picturesque setting.

ANTWERP

Hotel Astoria - Superior 3 star - 1 night from £99 - 2 nights from £189. Conveniently located in the heart of the city, close to central park and 5 minutes from the train station. The modern decorations are done in soft shades. The level of comfort and amenities of this hotel makes this standard of class extra good value.

Hotel Carlton - 4 Star - 1 night from £119 - 2 nights from £189. Contemporary business oriented hotel, overlooking the city park near the heart of the city and the diamond centre.

Holiday Inn Crown Plaza - Superior 4 Star - 1 night from £119 - 2 nights from £189. Contemporary hotel 5km from city centre, train station and airport, excellent facilities and very comfortable rooms.

*Terms and conditions: All bookings are subject to availability. The listed prices are for two people sharing a twin room. There is a single occupancy room rate that you will be advised of upon booking. All flights are from Gatwick airport. Please do not include transfer to and from the airport or airport tax which currently stands at £3.00 for Antwerp and £15.00 for Amsterdam. Travel insurance is recommended for all overseas travel and is available from Travel Plus, the booking agent.

Passengers are responsible for their own passports (which must be a 10 year passport). Residents should be aware that no changes or cancellations are available with this offer. Lost or stolen tickets are non-refundable. A full list of terms and conditions is available from Travel Plus. Flights are operated by the independent carrier City Flyer Express.

LONDON

business

Compass pays £227m for French catering group

Andrew Yates

Compass, the UK's largest caterer, has closed the gap on France's two biggest catering groups, including its arch-rival Sodexo, by paying £227.1m for a 93 per cent stake in SHRM. The acquisition of the French food group also gives Compass a foothold in two new markets, Canada and Australia.

But while Compass has been able to secure one sizeable purchase it has virtually given up hope of buying its primary target, France's largest catering group Generale de Restauration (GDR). Compass is selling its 11.2 per cent stake in GDR just six months after acquiring it.

"We originally took a seat at the table to influence what happened at GDR. But its fate has been determined by its management. They wanted to maintain its independence and our strategy has had to change," said Roger Matthews, managing director of Compass. It still has first right of refusal to buy the business for the next three years but it looks increasingly likely it will not come up for sale.

The disposal price is not being disclosed, although Mr Matthews said that Compass stood to make a "good profit".



Still spending: Frances Macleay, Compass's chief executive (left) with managing director Roger Matthews

on the stake, which was originally bought for just over £8m.

SHRM made a profit of £17m on sales of £436m last year. Mr Matthews is confident that he will be able to increase operating margins at the business from the current 4 per cent to the 5 per cent level enjoyed

by the rest of Compass's continental European businesses.

"The market is consolidating quickly. The main advantage will be the economies available from increased purchasing power," said Jean Jacques Vironde, an analyst at SGST brokers. SHRM is also a good

fit with Compass's existing businesses in the burgeoning health-care and educational contract catering markets.

Compass has embarked on a big spending spree over the last few years which has led to it becoming the largest catering group in the world alongside Sodexo. The acquisition of SHRM follows hot on the heels of its purchase of US food group Duka for £120m last month. Last year it established a strong presence in the French catering market with the £124m acquisition of the 66 per cent stake in Eurest France it did not already own.

The spending is far from over but the number of large targets available is diminishing and Compass may be forced to make smaller purchases in future.

The latest deal received a mixed review from analysts and Compass's shares fell 15p to 702p. "This is a decent purchase but at around 19 times historical earnings this is hardly a hugely cheap deal," said one analyst.

Another was worried that Compass was guilty of buying too much too quickly: "It has spent a lot of money in the last few years, seeming to buy everything that moved. Now it has to prove it can start getting decent returns from these businesses."

IN BRIEF

Union Pacific makes bid for Pennzoil

Union Pacific Resources has made a \$6.4bn (£3.8bn) hostile bid for Pennzoil, owner of America's best-selling brand name in motor oil and a petroleum exploration business. Union Pacific is offering \$84 a share in cash for 50.1 per cent of Pennzoil's outstanding shares. If the initial bid succeeds, Union Pacific will offer \$84 in stock for the remaining shares of Pennzoil, a move that would be tax-free to investors. The Houston-based Pennzoil said it would review the offer and reply before 7 July, having already rejected an \$80-a-share bid made earlier this month. Union has also filed a lawsuit in a Delaware court demanding that Pennzoil's "poison-pill" shareholder rights plan be overturned. In 1985, Pennzoil was awarded record damages of \$10.5bn after it was gazzumped in a bid for Getty Oil by rivals Texaco and later settled for \$3bn.

Sema wins contracts worth £42m

Sema, the Anglo-French information technology group, has won a clutch of outsourcing deals worth more than £42m. The group, which has seen its share price more than double over the past year, has signed a seven-year contract worth in excess of £23m with Thames Water to manage the utility's customer billing and complaints, along with its mainframe computer processing and data centre operations. Sema has also been selected as prime contractor with Sema, the international aircraft engine manufacturer, in a £19m deal to build an integrated information centre and redesign its business processing system. The deals are the latest in a string of contracts including, earlier this month, the first public sector outsourcing contract awarded under the Labour government - a £20m deal to run information technology at 18 UK airports.

Allen builds on jump in profits

Allen, the Bolton-based construction group, said it had started the current year with record order levels. Reporting a jump in profits from £7.86m to £10.5m for the 12 months to March, the chairman, Donald Greenhalgh, said the outlook for the overall construction market continued to improve. "I look forward to an excellent 1997/98," he said. Work in hand had risen from £28.4m to £36.7m and, with a further £57m at the recently acquired PS Turner, this should produce a significant increase in turnover and operating profit, the company said. A final dividend of 4.7p raises the annual total from 6.65p to 7.5p.

Venture to invest £100m in UK property

St Modwen Properties has formed a 50-50 joint venture called Key Property Investments with Sathia Real Estate Company of Kuwait. The joint venture is to invest up to £100m in UK commercial investment property. The acquisition criteria were for lots generally to be worth more than £15m, where value could be added by redevelopment, refurbishment and improving tenant mix and restructuring leases, the company said.

Waste Management France sold to Sita

Waste Management International has sold Waste Management France together with approximately £33.8m of inter-company debt to Sita in a £67.5m deal. Payment will comprise £28 in cash, £5.7m in deferred consideration payable by Sita within the next three years and £33.8m in promissory notes. Net assets involved were worth around £14.5m in December, which recorded pre-tax profits of £1.6m last year.

Wimpey gains £30m from disposals

George Wimpey has sold part of its property portfolio for around £30m. The company said the disposals were a part of its strategic disposal programme of residual assets and non-core businesses following an asset swap with Tarmac last year. The package comprises a combination of commercial office and warehouse space, with the largest disposal being Vantage West, a landmark office building in West London which has been sold to PDEM, the UK pension fund managers. Other sales include Bishopsgate Court in London to a German property fund and Enterprise Business Park in London, which has gone to an off-shore pension fund.

Company Results

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
AEA Technology (F)	264.1m (253.2m)	18.5m (15.8m)	15.5p (18.3p)	8.4p
Allen (F)	153.5m (109m)	10.5m (7.9m)	18.5p (16.3p)	7.55p (6.55p)
Harvey Nichols (F)	114.3m (90.2m)	12.1m (9.2m)	14.5p (10.5p)	5.5p
Highways Systems (F)	16.33m (13.23m)	879,000 (895,000)	7.2p (7.2p)	
Lombard (F)	1,071m (1,038m)	30m (61m)	2.3p (4.1p)	2.25p
TBI (F)	95.82m (86.37m)	19.05m (10.1m)	4.22p (3.57p)	1.5p
Wiltshire (F)	141.1m (143.2m)	3.3m (8.1m)	5.3p (14.1p)	5.0p (5.0p)
Yorkshire Food (F)	199.3m (174.4m)	-26.23m (5.91m)	-56.3p (10.47p)	0.88p (3.88p)
(F) - Final (I) - Interim (N) - Nine months				

Granada offer expected today

Cathy Newman

Granada Group is today expected to table a formal offer for its neighbouring Yorkshire Tyne-Tees Television company, after a series of high-level meetings yesterday.

Barring last-minute hitches, a 90-page offer document is to be circulated to shareholders today, confirming Granada's bid at £11.75 a share. City analysts had expected Gerry Robinson's media and leisure conglomerate to increase its offer by around 20p after a rebellion by institutional shareholders.

However, Granada is thought to be confident of the support of all the major shareholders with the exception of Mercury Asset Management. MAM's objections would not be enough to scupper the bid, especially as Lord Hollick's United News & Media, which has a 14 per cent stake in Yorkshire, is under-

stood to be in favour of the deal. Ward Thomas, Yorkshire's chairman, visited institutional shareholders last Friday to explain why he had been prepared to entertain Granada's approaches, which value the company at £710m, when he had previously said he would not sell for less than £17 a share.

But despite Granada's confidence that the institutions had been won over, some were last night voting to vote against the offer. One source at a significant shareholder said: "I don't believe the situation has changed." However, he added: "If Lord Hollick backs Granada our task is going to be somewhat difficult."

Granada already has a 27 per cent stake in Yorkshire. Mr Robinson, the company's chairman, said earlier this month that ITV companies should merge into "one entity" to allow for greater efficiency.

AEA boosts work in private sector

Michael Harrison

AEA Technology, the consultancy arm of the Atomic Energy Authority that was floated on the stock market last year, is planning a series of acquisitions to increase its private-sector workload and reduce dependence on nuclear clean-up contracts.

Announcing its maiden set of annual results - a 16 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £19.6m - Peter Watson, chief executive, said AEA Technology was examining further small-scale bolt-on acquisitions.

Turnover from contracts with the old AEA, which is based at Harwell and runs several test atomic sites, has fallen from £60m to £45m and is expected to decline further this year.

But AEA Technology has offset the fall in government

contracts by forging alliances with private-sector partners including Sony, Sumitomo, BP, Lockheed Martin and Smith-Kline Beecham.

Private sector business grew by 18 per cent last year while overseas sales increased by 34 per cent, helped partly by the purchase of a Canadian company, Advanced Scientific Computing. Among the contracts it is working on is a project to design and build the new Scottish air traffic control centre.

AEA Technology has also moved further into the transport sector through the purchase of British Rail Research and is working with GEC Alsthom to supply new trains to Gatwick Express and South West Trains that are compatible with Rail-track's signalling and telecommunications systems.

Sameena Ahmad

Nervousness that ICI will be hit by the strength of sterling, which yesterday reached its highest level for five years, and a steep profits downgrade by analysts at Merrill Lynch, overshadowed news that the chemicals giant stands to make almost £1bn from the sale of its controlling stake in its Australian business. The group's shares fell 41p to 807.5p.

Robyn Coombs, an analyst at Merrill Lynch, downgraded her 1997 pre-tax profits forecast

from £530m to £450m, excluding maiden profits from the Unilever speciality chemicals business bought for £8bn this May, and sliced £60m off the projection for 1998 to £640m.

A second broker was widely rumoured to be on the verge of downgrading from £544m to £440m for this year because of difficult trading, the need for significant disposals to cut the £5bn debt bill after the Unilever deal and the strength of sterling. ICI exports around a fifth of its sales and makes more than half its profits in US dollars.

However, several analysts said ICI was due for an upward re-rating as a speciality chemicals group and rising chemicals prices and a good potential price for the ICI Australia stake meant the group was on a fast track to cut debt. Peter Blair, chemicals analyst at Salomon Brothers, thought ICI's shares could be worth around £11 by 2000. "The next two years' earnings are irrelevant. ICI is a new story," he said.

Though ICI said it would consider an offer from a major player for the whole of its 6.24 per

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

No news is bad news for Lonrho as shares struggle

Lonrho has proved a graveyard for the reputations of its chief executives, if not their pockets. After the Tiny Rowland years, the arrival of Dieter Bock in the hot seat four years ago was hailed by investors as the catalyst which would unlock the potential of the sprawling mining to hotels conglomerate.

As it happened, most of the value was unlocked by Mr Bock himself when he sold his 18.5 per cent stake to the South African mining giant Anglo American in October for 180p a share, netting him a profit of around £100m. Yesterday the shares were up 1p at 129p, having underperformed the market by 50 per cent since peaking at 217p in February 1996.

News of the results for the half-year to March showing pre-tax profits slashed from £60m to £22m did little to advance analysts' knowledge. The figures were in line with expectations already adjusted sharply downwards following a profit warning in March days after Mr Bock left the board.

So nothing new there, but what people had really been hoping for yesterday was further news of the various break-up moves initiated by Mr Bock and being continued by Sir John Craven, chairman. Again, there was little to add to what the market already knew.

The merger talks announced last month between Lonrho and ICI, the black-controlled South African mining group, apparently remain at a tentative stage. Lonrho's emphasis yesterday that it was not keen to sell its 33 per cent holding in Ashanti may have reduced the chances of a deal over the next couple of months, given the key role of Anglo, which was previously said to covet the stake.

Again there was little to report on the demerger of the African trading operations, which will not happen until next year. Elsewhere, the sale of the Princess Hotels to Prince al-Waleed, the Saudi billionaire, is said to be imminent but investors should not hold their breath. The rumoured knock-down price of £270m is more easily explained after the news that operating profits are down £2m to £10m in the latest six months.

Meanwhile, it remains unclear why a private investor

should want a stake in Lonrho Africa when it is spun off. Comprising a rag-bag of interests, profits were sharply lower. That said, the group does contain gems: May's sale of the South African sugar operations threw up a profit of £129m and Dunon-Forsyth, the British motor dealer which saw profits grow by £1m to £6m, looks a valuable asset.

Profit forecasts of £110m for the full year would put the shares onto a forward P/E of 26. Of more interest perhaps is the net asset value, put at 163p by Lonrho if all the quoted investments are included. Hold.

TBI prepares for take-off

TBI has transformed itself from a pure property group to a regional airport operator over the past few years. It now owns Cardiff and Belfast airports and last month made its first foray overseas, paying £4.3m for an airport in Orlando, Florida. More acquisitions are in the pipeline.

"We would expect to have bought at least one more airport within the next 18 months," says the chief executive, Keith Brooks. Newcastle, Luton, Bristol or Coventry are the likely candidates.

The diversification looks a shrewd one. World-wide, aircraft traffic is growing strongly and there are plenty of bargains to be had as there are a

host of cash-strapped local authorities keen to attract private funds to revamp airports. Profits before tax rose 89 per cent to £19.1m in the year to March, chiefly due to an increase in airport earnings from £2.9m to £8.3m. TBI is pushing up passenger spend per head by revamping the retailing facilities at its airports.

Unfortunately passenger numbers were flat last year due to a slump in the UK charter market as tour operators cut back on excess capacity. That said, prospects this year look much brighter, with demand stronger and the number of holidays on offer up by around 15 per cent. TBI is looking to open up its airports to more destinations.

TBI is also planning to beef up its property portfolio after rooting out some of its poorer sites. Schemes such as the redevelopment of an office and retail estate off Tottenham Court Road, in London's West End, look encouraging.

Credit: Lyonais Laing (CLL) forecasts current year profits of £21m, putting the shares up 0.5p at 88p, on a prospective P/E ratio of 20.

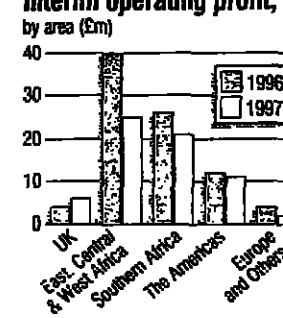
With its substantial property portfolio, however, it is unfair to value TBI on earnings alone. A better way is to look at how much its airports and properties are currently worth. CLL reckons TBI's assets are worth at least 100p a share and probably more than 110p. On that reckoning the shares look cheap.

Lonrho: At a glance

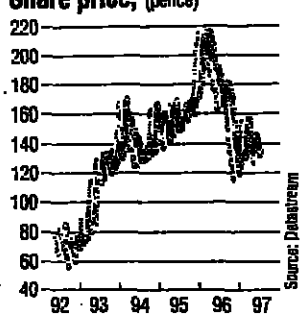
Market value: £1.02bn, share price 129p

Trading record	1994	1995	1996	1996	1997
		Full year	Half year	Half year	Half year
Turnover (£bn)	1.96	2.11	2.15	1.04	1.01
Pre-tax profits (£m)	112	161	78	60	22
Earnings per share (p)	6.6	10.2		4.0	0.3
Dividends per share (p)	4.75	5.25	5.25	2.25	2.25

Interim operating profit, by area (£m)



Share price, (pence)



Life's not so fab at Harvey Nichols

Shares in Harvey Nichols, the "Ab Fab" department store in London's Knightsbridge, were priced so highly when the company floated in April last year that there was always a danger investors would end up looking like fashion victims.

Placed with institutions at 270p, they soared to 334p in the first day's dealings after the issue was 15 times oversubscribed. Given the difficulty most private investors have of getting in on a placing, it was at the higher price that most small punters had to buy.

And by they did, despite the fact that at those levels the shares were trading on a stratospheric rating of 32

times the previous year's earnings. That rating left no margin for error and many of the well-heeled Sloane Rangers who piled in must wonder whether it was worth the effort.

After peaking at 372p last October, the shares have slid downhill ever since. Yesterday they dipped 16.5p to 286p on news of a slowdown in sales at the flagship Knightsbridge store.

Though profits in the 12 months to 29 March were 30 per cent higher at £12.1m, it was the news on trading in the 10 weeks since the year end which hit the shares.

Like-for-like sales in the Knightsbridge store are just 3

per cent ahead of the same period last year. This was below expectations. The remainder of the 15 per cent increase came from the new store which opened in Leeds last October. Here the news is better. The Leeds store is trading ahead of forecasts, as is the Oxo Tower restaurant on the south bank of the Thames in London, which opened in September.

But the feeling in the City is that Harvey Nicks will need a good second half to reach the £16m profits some analysts are pencilling in for the current year. Even so, now on a more sensible forward rating of 15, the shares look worth holding.

ICI shares slide as profit forecasts cut

Sameena Ahmad

Nervousness that ICI will be hit by the strength of sterling, which yesterday reached its highest level for five years, and a steep profits downgrade by analysts at Merrill Lynch, overshadowed news that the chemicals giant stands to make almost £1bn from the sale of its controlling stake in its Australian business. The group's shares fell 41p to 807.5p.

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Though ICI said it would consider an offer from a major player for the whole of its 6.24 per

cent stake in quoted group ICI Australia, analysts estimated the group could still net around £850m from selling the shares to institutions. "It is encouraging that, despite the announcement, ICI Australia's share price has held up," said Charles Brown at Goldman Sachs.

Mr Blair said ICI could beat its target of £3bn from divestments in three years: "Making close to £1bn just a few months after Unilever is pretty quick. It shows ICI means business."

Analysts said recent chemical price rises meant the group was

more likely to get a decent price for the other main disposal candidates -ioxide and polyester. Tioxide prices, which fell around 15 per cent last year, have risen by 10 per cent on the Continent and 5 per cent in the US and more price rises are expected.

"The Australia deal takes the pressure off ICI for a sale, but with prices going in the right direction, soon could be a good time to sell," said one analyst. Dupont is a lead contender to buy Tioxide, which could fetch around £700m. Polyester could go for £1bn.

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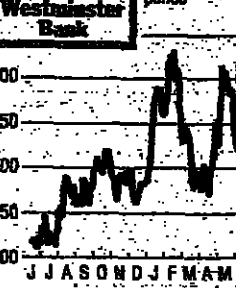
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4454.8	-30.2
FTSE 350	
2219.0	-10.1
SEAQ VOLUME	
871.5m shares,	
54,330 bargains	
Gifts Index	
n/a	

National share price



After brief opening strength Footsie sagged to a 46.9-point loss before an afternoon comeback cut the fall to 18.1 at 4,575.8. The rally reflected a late recovery in the futures market and takeover speculation. It was the sixth consecutive Footsie retreat, taking its loss to more than 200 points. Stories about the damage inflicted by the witching hour are becoming sufficiently bizarre to enter City folklore.

Many are convinced a major securities house suffered a daunting loss – perhaps more than £200m.

There is confusion whether it was the £1.5bn punt taken out last November on the future direction of Footsie or the unwinding of a series of smaller contracts which created the volatility.

It is, however, clear that at least one substantial player took a hiding. The Footsie punt, backing a 4,300 level, had been out of the money for so long it would be surprising if evasive action had not been taken to cover at least most of the contract. It could be the rump of the contract, together with smaller deals, combined to do the damage as desperate attempts were made to square positions. It is widely believed stock was dumped in the cash market to meet derivative obligations.

Alongside the expiry excitement the market had to contend with the hovering shadow of Gordon Brown's Budget with the list of measures likely to be introduced growing by the day. The spectre of higher interest rates and an uninspiring New York display lengthened the shadows.



DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

FTSE 250 index was sharply lower and the FTSE SmallCap index fell 14.7 to 2,246. 4.

General Electric Co and National Westminster Bank provided the takeover excitement. NatWest finished with a 37p gain to 783.5p with rumoured bidder, **Barclays**, 5.5p firmer at 1,169p.

There is little doubt NatWest looks vulnerable after its abortive merger talks with Abbey National, the problems at its securities side and last week's profit warning. The market is convinced corporate action will explode in the financial sector. NatWest has merely been added to the list of candidates.

Halifax and Alliance & Leicester, expected to celebrate their first day in Footsie, found the prevailing gloom overpowering and ended with losses of 20.5p to 749.5p and 8.5p to 594.5p respectively.

GE, up 15.5p to 354p, responded to the resurrection of the British Aerospace merger story. It is thought boardroom changes at GEC could clear the way for dialogue to start. There is a growing belief that George Simpson, GEC's new power, is in favour of a Bae deal.

Centrica, the rather neglected side of the old British Gas, gained 2.5p to 71.25p following meetings with analysts.

Tobacco plants coughed and wheezed. The US litigation settlement dividend analysis, BAT's share price, which was an US off-shoot, fell. B&W's share price, would take an initial \$1.70 hit if the settlement became law, lost 21.5p to 567.5p; recently floated Gallaher, Britain's biggest tobacco group, fell 18p to 28.2p and Imperial Tobacco 13.5p to 393.5p.

The surprise departure of Bill Cockburn from VWR Smith left the shares wallowing 35p lower at 376.5p. The vacuum could revive stories Tesco is keen to revive at the high street newsgast. It is believed the supermarkets plan to open closely.

Smith, believing many of its outlets could be converted to its Metro style of store.

Engineer Glynwed slipped 3.5p to 262p as NatWest Securities lowered its estimates but Imperial Chemical Industries was the main downgrading casualty, slumping 41p

to 807.5p after Merrill Lynch was said to have slashed its forecast by 290m to £450m from £740m to £450m.

Maid, the on-line information group, fell 10.5p to 149.5p, responding to Reuters' decision to stop supplying its key news database.

Freepages, the telephone group, edged ahead 1.75p to 38.5p on talk it could be the subject of a reverse takeover and, on Ofex, Display IT, the information group, crashed 110p to 390p following critical comment.

Millwall, the football club rescued from the corporate cesspool, returned at 0.5p.

Young & Co's Brewery "A" shares frothed 35p higher to 697.5p. Guinness Fest, headed by New Zealand entrepreneur Sir Ron Brierley, has acquired a third for Young's and at last count had a 14.11 per cent interest in the family-controlled group's "A" shares.

▶ **HTV**, the independent TV contractor, edged ahead to 27.5p with stockbroker Henderson Crosthwaite suggesting United News & Media will bid at not less than 420p a share. Analysts Louise Barron and Matthew Horsman say profits little changed until HTV gets concessions on its licence payments from 1999. This year's figure could be £11.1m.

▶ **Emmer International** firm to 23.5p. Incoming chairman Brian Cusack has purchased 200,000 shares. They came from the Hughes Family Trust, related to retiring director Pat Hughes, which sold 2.5 million. The company owns a zinc oxide deposit in Kazakhstan.

▶ **Heningway Properties** has attracted stockbroker Albert Sharp which regards the share, at 38p, as a buy

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: x Ex rights x Ex-dividend x Ex all u Unlisted Securities Market s Suspended
 pp Parity Paid pm Nil Paid Shares. \$ AIM Stock Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

UK Company News	02	Wall St Report	20	Electricity Shares	40
Foreign Exchange	03	Tokyo Market	21	High Street Banks	41

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1997				1997				1997					
High	Low	Stocks	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Ratio	High	Low	Stocks	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E Ratio
250.0	300.0	Conrad Fibres	262	-	32	85.0	79.5	37	EW Fast	46	-	58	72
240.0	335	Dynalene	305	-	33	103	100	57.5	East Pac	60	+8	40	140
32.0	58	Deere	54	-2	27	20.0	602	49	R Group	198	-	10	434
30.0	48	Diamond	47.5	-	30	16.0	385	34	Dynasys	38	+15.7	71	404
39.0	40.5	Dynalene	40.5	-	31	16.0	385	34	Quorum Tech	45	-11	10	434
250.0	305	Dynalene	305	-	33	103	100	57.5	Hays Group	580	-3	19	261
37.0	44.5	Dwyer Inc	40.5	-1	28	102	100	94	Hogdon	95.5	-	58	59
45.0	58.0	Eastman	49	-	47	33.5	107	10	Intell	68.5	+11	33	80
45.0	58.0	Eastman	49	-	47	33.5	107	10	JSA Holdings	85.5	+10	07	465
45.0	58.0	Eastman	49	-	47	33.5	107	10	JSA Holdings	85.5	+10	07	465

[illegible]

Judge Brown's Budget on his efforts to curb the Micawbers

How do you gather up a windfall? The London markets are waking up to the fact that something has to be done to stop the windfall gains from the flotation of the building society and mutual insurance groups from feeding through into additional demand.

About time too, you might think. The problem has been evident for the best part of a year and economists have been trying to calculate the impact for several months. But it has only been in the past few weeks that financial markets have cottoned on to the full practical implications. These are: one, that interest rates will have to rise quite sharply through this year even if inflation continues to behave itself, simply to mop up these savings; and two, that if the new Chancellor wants an excuse to raise personal taxation, the scale of the windfalls gives him a half-respectable one.

But of course both options are extremely unsatisfactory. Increasing interest rates has an impact on the whole economy, not just people who have received windfalls, and in the first instance at least tends to hit companies as much as individuals. In any case it would not have any significant direct effect on the people involved: people who suddenly find an extra £5,000 in their accounts are not going to be greatly influenced by the fact that base rates have gone up half a point.

Increasing taxation is also mis-targeted, for it too affects the whole economy, not just the gainers. But in addition there are powerful political, moral and practical objections to using the tax weapon. The political objections are obvious: the incoming government indicated that it would not increase taxation, certainly in any significant way, before the election, unless there was some unforeseen need to do so. The moral objections lead on from this: there is no need, and the money would come in large measure not from the gainers but from people who have "won" nothing at all. Revenues are coming in well above forecast. Notwith-



Hamish McRae

The great looming issue is how to alter the savings habits of millions of people; to use the windfalls as a way of kick-starting a process of social change. And there is not a lot of time

standing the controversial use of the Audit Commission to re-examine the Treasury's figures, even on its (surely overly) cautious assumptions, public finances are heading for a surplus in the early years of the next century.

And the practical argument is that no conceivable rise in taxation is going to make any dent on the size of the windfall. Say personal taxation were increased by a net £3.5bn, the maximum anyone has suggested. That would only be equivalent to 10 per cent of the windfall gains.

So what is to be done? There will have to be some rise in interest

rates anyway to curb incipient inflationary pressures, but the real need is to mop up savings. Judge the forthcoming Budget by the extent to which it does that.

What will Gordon Brown do? Well, we know that there will be a new scheme for long-term savers so that people establish some form of life-time savings account - that was promised before the election. That is extremely welcome. What we do not know is the details either of the scheme itself or how it will fit in with existing savings incentives. Will this be additional to existing savings incentives such as PEPs? Presumably it will because it makes no sense to create a new incentive but discourage people from using existing ones. To do so would have little net impact on savings. But will some of the cost be clawed back by limiting tax incentives on saving for pensions? Presumably yes.

More important still, will the new savings scheme be contractual? Will people have to save a regular amount each month or year? It is important that it is not, partly because the short-term problem is the need to mop up the lump sums of the windfalls; but also because the whole structure of employment is moving towards a situation where people can expect to receive lump sums (from bonuses, share options and, sadly, redundancy) rather than have secure monthly salaries. We need a savings system which enables people to stash it away when they can afford it, and not have to scrimp to keep a savings plan going when they can't.

This is a terrific opportunity to cope with a one-off problem in a way which brings long-term continuing benefits. There are several powerful reasons for wanting to encourage more saving in the UK. Personal savings are rather low by international standards, though contractual savings through funded pensions and home purchase are unusually high. Associated with this is unusually high consumption levels: we consume more as a percentage of GDP than most other

developed countries, and have somewhat low investment rates.

Getting people to save more does not automatically increase investment, and in any case investment as conventionally measured is not always the economic good it is sometimes made out to be. Not only is a lot of investment wasted: our Sixties tower blocks now being torn down, Japan's Eighties high-definition analogue television, maybe even the millennium dome. So much of our capital now is human capital rather than physical plant and equipment, that it is hard to distinguish investment from consumption.

But whether you buy the investment argument or not, the combination of growing economic uncertainties and demographic change should make us want to encourage higher savings rates. At some stage in the next year we can expect the results of the review of our pensions system, led by Frank Field, which may well incorporate an element of compulsory contractual saving.

But now the need is to use this unique time to encourage discretionary windfall saving. It is not of ten that people in this country have £35bn swishing around that they didn't know they had. In fact it has never happened before.

Looked at in the wider context, this debate about whether taxes should go up by a couple of billion or interest rates by a quarter or a half percentage point is really pretty unimportant. A couple of billion in an economy of £500bn is tiny; the odd half a per cent on short-term interest rates is barely relevant. These are blips on the radar screen. But £35bn is big. The great looming issue is how to alter the savings habits of millions of people; to use the bonuses as a way of kick-starting a process of social change. And there is not a lot of time.

We are a nation of Micawbers. Given half a chance the Great British Public will have spent the windfall before the Chancellor has found a way of persuading us to do otherwise.

Cockburn's new job brings an old rivalry to the fore

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

When Bill Cockburn described the offer from BT to become its new UK managing director as "irresistible" and "glittering", what he didn't mention is a rivalry with BT's chairman Sir Iain Vallance that dates back to the time when Harold Wilson was the new Labour Prime Minister.

Well, roughly. Mr Cockburn joined the old Post Office in 1961, while Sir Iain joined the same organisation in 1966. The pair were born within three months of each other in 1943 and as they climbed the corporate ladder a rivalry emerged.

Several decades later along came Margaret Thatcher, and BT was detached from the Post Office, with Sir Iain at its helm. Mr Cockburn elected to stay with the Post Office side, but his hopes of leading it into the private sector as a BT were dashed by the Government. So he upped sticks and went off to rescue WH Smith - but not for very long, as it turns out. Now Sir Iain and Bill are reunited. Who knows - will Bill win the race in the last lap?

Here's another shock departure: John Thomson, chief investment manager with the venerable Standard Life, has unexpectedly resigned over "management differences".

The mutual, with £52bn under management, is striving hard to expand its unit trust and PEP side, and apparently Mr Thomson didn't like the "pace and order" with which this was being done.

Sandy Crombie, Standard Life's group chief investment manager, dismisses any ideas that Mr Thomson might be in line for a fat-cashed payoff. "He's resigned. He wasn't pushed. There is no compensation."

Mr Crombie explains: "We have short notice contracts here." He says Mr Thomson handed in his resignation a week ago, and since then they have been planning how to break the news in an organised way. Asked what Mr Thomson now plans to do, Mr Crombie replies simply: "He'll be looking for a job."

Mr Crombie refuses to go into further detail about Mr Thomson's reasons, but the problem seems to



Reunited: Sir Iain Vallance will be working with Bill Cockburn

stem from Standard Life's expansion plans. Independent financial advisers traditionally regard the company as an insurer, and look to fund management companies for unit trusts and corporate pension funds. Standard now wants to break into this lucrative market - and fast.

Sandy Mr Thomson is unavailable to explain which bit of this strategy he disagrees with. Fancy some nice new furniture for the boardroom? Why not commission it from someone who's spent most of his life in business, but now prefers the workshop to the office. Peter Bielby, a former senior vice president of Gemini Consulting, left the \$500m Boston-based management consultancy three years ago to design and build modern furniture.

After 20 years in consultancy Mr Bielby studies furniture-making at Parnham College in Dorset, the design and carpentry college attended by Lord Linley. The main difference between consulting and building a chair is that you are "dealing with the material" as opposed to the immaterial", he

says. He now charges £120 a chair, or a chunky £10,000 if you want a boardroom table.

His first collection will appear in an exhibition starting on 30 June at The Gallery in Cork Street, London. At the moment, though, he's still ankle-deep in sawdust. "I've still got seven days to go," he says confidently.

If you think you have a busy schedule, spare a thought for Martin Day, a partner with the law firm Leigh Day. He is currently representing former British prisoners of war in their claim against the Japanese government, has been leading Britain's only class action against tobacco companies and is also representing people who claim a link between electro-magnetic fields and cancer.

Speaking from Japan yesterday, Mr Day said he had just finished "a fantastic day in court". The former POWs are claiming damages from Japan for alleged mistreatment under the Hague Convention of 1907. One of the government's main claims, that individuals could not sue under international law, took a battering yesterday, he says.

He is also organising the UK class action by 47 lung cancer victims against Imperial Tobacco and Gallaher, with a hearing pencilled in for 1 July. "It's the first ever British no-win, no-fee group action," he tells me. Then on the third of July he is expecting a survey to be published which should radically strengthen the argument that living near high-voltage pylons can increase the risk of cancer. He is due to represent two children in court.

"So how does he find the time?" "I only get involved in cases that I'm interested in myself. I enjoy cases with a political element to them, where my heart as well as my brain will be involved."

Before you get too envious, Mr Day pricks the bubble: "Having said that, my wife and kids would like to see more of me."

John Willcock

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1.6540	14.12	42.39	1000	1000	1000	1000
Canada	2.3238	68.48	203.37	32.91	32.91	32.91	32.91
Germany	2.2848	84.83	261.25	17.21	17.21	17.21	17.21
France	6.5888	268.27	826.78	15.435	15.435	15.435	15.435
Italy	287.12	249.23	712.02	16.778	16.778	16.778	16.778
Japan	189.85	59.97	285.29	14.96	14.96	14.96	14.96
ECU	1.4535	30.59	96.92	16.778	16.778	16.778	16.778
Belgium	36.91	89.85	321.51	32.91	32.91	32.91	32.91
Denmark	10.00	27.27	85.82	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
Netherlands	3.2228	95.33	288.21	19.484	19.484	19.484	19.484
Norway	10.98	109.8	329.56	14.12	14.12	14.12	14.12
Spain	24.98	249.8	729.56	16.778	16.778	16.778	16.778
Sweden	12.028	321.32	1019.55	14.12	14.12	14.12	14.12
Switzerland	2.3333	106.10	320.37	14.049	14.049	14.049	14.049
Australia	2.2007	9.3	30.20	13.31	13.31	13.31	13.31
Hong Kong	12.95	13.2	13.4	7.263	7.263	7.263	7.263
New Zealand	4.993	34.51	102.43	23.947	23.947	23.947	23.947
Singapore	2.3808	37.33	123.10	3.158	3.158	3.158	3.158
South Africa	2.3808	49.44	153.41	14.273	14.273	14.273	14.273

Other Spot Rates

Country	Spot	Dollar	Country	Spot	Dollar
Argentina	16538	0.0998	Nigeria	140.03	0.0050
Australia	2.2007	12.571	Oman	0.6570	0.0050
Brazil	1.7834	1.0779	Pakistan	66.574	0.0050
Canada	1.3274	0.7295	Philippines	49.650	0.0050
China	8.2756	0.1562	Portugal	206.72	0.0050
ECU	1.4535	0.7295	Romania	6.6721	0.0050
France	6.5888	0.1562	Saudi Arabia	57.840	0.0050
Germany	2.2848	0.1562	South Africa	74.634	0.0050
Greece	49.269	0.0050	Taiwan	27.950	0.0050
India	55.275	0.0050	UAE	50.770	0.0050
Indonesia	1550.0	0.0050			

Forward rates quoted low to high are at a discount; subtract from spot rate. Rates quoted low to high are at a premium; add to spot rate. *Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals. For the latest foreign exchange rates call 081 123 3033. Calls cost 50p per minute.

Interest Rates

UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	6.50%	Discount	2.50%	Prime	8.50%	Discount	0.50%
France		Lombard	4.50%	Discount	6.00%	Belgium	
3 month	3.10%	Canada		3 month	5.50%	Central	2.50%
6 month		Prime	4.75%	Spain		Switzerland	3.00%
1 year	6.75%	Discount	2.96%	10-Day Rep	5.25%	Denmark	
Netherlands		Denmark		Sweden		Discount	100%
Advances	2.90%	Discount	3.26%	Rep (Ave)	4.10%	Lombard	na %

Timely triumph can trigger boost to British athletics

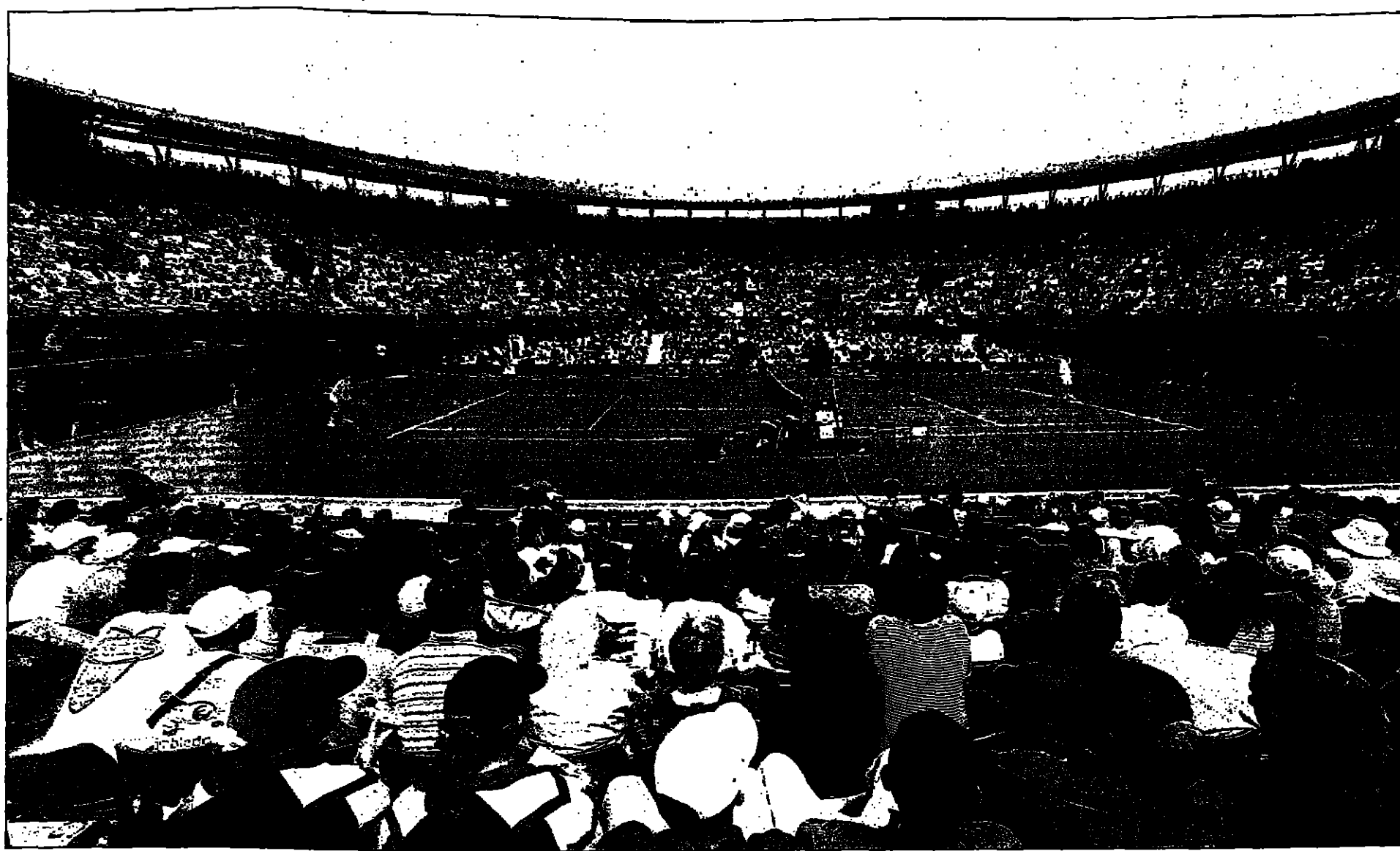
Edwards, however, believes he can return to competition by joining a German club. "It's terribly complicated," he said yesterday. "I find it unbelievable. But as far as I'm concerned I'll be joining a German club and competing in this country again."

And you thought
Saturday was
the longest day.

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sport

WIMBLEDON 97



Inaugural ball: Daniel Nestor (right) serves to Tim Henman at the start of the first match on No 1 Court at Wimbledon yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

New places, old familiar faces

It is a British peculiarity that they like new things to look old. They seek to live in houses with a Georgian facade stapled to the front, and they like to go to No 1 courts that are virtually identical.

The crust of the new No 1 at the All England Club is draughtsman's sketch modern, all angles and plant pots. A person taken to the interior under blindfold would find it difficult to tell the difference from the old arena, however. A use has been found for those great vats of dark green paint left over from the last big job in SW19.

Underneath the playing area is a merchandising shop and food hall and, for those who need to help to get over the twinges of a close encounter, a chemist and bar offer a variety of tranquillizers. The whole effect is of an Armada Centre with a lawn on the roof.

Such an edifice obviously requires an appropriate launch, and so it was that a clutch of multiple Wimbledon winners were invited to yesterday's opening ceremony. Billie Jean King

was there in a purple suit on loan from *Babar the Elephant*. Boris Becker appeared to have stepped down from the poster of *Reservoir Dogs* and then there was Supermac or Superbrat, depending on your tolerance levels.

John McEnroe, who has cut a presidential figure until recent days (OK, he's sported Abraham Lincoln-type facial hair) was back at the scene of his more celebrated crimes. There are grey, badger-like flashes about the old warrior's temples these days, but an impish humour remains. The commemorative silver salver he received was sent up to his fingertips and then transported around the court in butler fashion.

Chris Evert was introduced as being as "American as apple pie", which rather ignored the fish and chip years when she was Mrs J M Lloyd.

In the stands, there was Jackie Stewart and, just in case things turned seriously indecent, Sir Cliff Richard. If the sky had even approached the blue severity of the Young One's jacket, play would not have been punctuated. As it was, there was weather that once gave Vivaldi the idea for a com-

Richard Edmondson sees a meeting of past and present in the impressive No 1 Court

position. Cold winds, blue skies, sunshine, great bunches of cumulo nimbus and rain followed each other in random succession.

The Duke of Kent measured the height of the net and then set about his momentous speech. "I now declare the No 1 court officially open," he opened and concluded. Those on the after-dinner speaking circuit are believed to have slept soundly last night.

The Duke was applauded, but then he was not alone. The Brits are a great nation of clappers and there was even a volley when the Royal Signals removed the covers. This seemed to answer the long-pondered riddle of what the studio audience of *Noel's House Party* does during the week.

In the new amphitheatre was the old stew of humanity, the polite club members, the exhibitionists (in this case four gentlemen wearing orange fluo-

rescent police helmets) and the schoolgirls programmed to trill "Come on, Tim" every 45 seconds. For yes, the man who was chosen to christen the new turf was the golden boy himself, Timothy Henman.

Our hero emerged with the tongues wagging both in the crowd and his tennis shoes. He may now be 22 and slightly bulkier than this time 12 months ago, but his body seems unwilling to cross the Rubicon into adulthood. Henman remains everyone's brother or son for each day he appears at Wimbledon.

It was left to another to hit the first ball in the new stadium, however. Amir Ghoneim of Egypt holds the cachet of having hit the last ball on the old court and it may be he rather fancied the idea. He served the concluding double fault of a Davis Cup tie. Yesterday, Daniel Nestor of Canada hit the first ball.

There were several spaces in the second tier during the knock-out, but these seats had been left empty by Cassandra and her friends. They knew that as the practice neared completion the skies would deposit. By the time the players returned, the prophets had taken their places and there was hard-

ly a vacant spot in the 11,000-seater auditorium.

The entire emotional tide was with Henman. For him, it must have been like taking part in school sports day and having everyone else's parents cheer you on as well. Team England triumphed in the end, but it took a cuticle-threatening first set to kick start the victory.

As the match matured, there was a palpable sense of disquiet among the crowd, the sort of feeling they have been dispensing about their male tennis players for a lot longer than Henman has inhabited planet earth. Into the tie-break, there was a tone of great anxiety in the collective larynx.

David Felgate, our man's coach, watched these proceedings with elbows on knees, muttering to himself and twitching. It was a good job he was not down there for us on the grassward, as he would have needed masking tape just to keep the racket in his hand.

A forehead return down the line later, Felgate was able to exhale at 13-11. The first set had been won, but it had threatened to give Christian Barnard an awful lot of work.

Court circular

Coetzer gets licence for service game

The drinks will be on Amanda Coetzer if she accelerates her remarkable improvement this year into a victory celebration on Saturday week. What's more, the diminutive South African will quite probably serve you a glass of something bubbly and refreshing herself.

Should Miss Coetzer's tennis career suddenly suffer a collapse – an unlikely prospect given the stranglehold that she has established over Steffi Graf with three crushing defeats in 1997 – then an alternate, if unlikely, pursuit as a bartender awaits her.

Her serving – the kind carried out with a tray, not a racket – was seen to particularly good effect at the Lipton Championships and again at the Bausch and Lomb

Championships at Amelia Island. "She served over 50 cases of Michelob and Michelob Light", Debbi Edwards of the Corel WTA Tour said, "and really worked hard. She even personally delivered a tub of ice and beers to the press room."

At the Lipton event, she helped out at a party given by the sponsors, Bacardi. Some people did not realise who it was and it was quite funny to see them ordering her around for another dash of lime.

The Coetzer sideline began last year at the Oklahoma WTA tour event where, along with some minor league ice hockey players, she went behind the bar to raise money for charity. She first had to obtain a licence and having secured one, she is determined to make good use of it.



Court jester: A novel way of keeping the rain off on the first day of Wimbledon

Photograph: David Ashdown

Boys from the wet stuff

It was hard yesterday in SW19 to escape the memory of another great English sporting institution. Three months on, the dreaded word on most lips as the long queue of humanity snuggled its way through the Wimbledon gates on day one was Aintree.

Fearful of the kind of disruption inflicted on the Grand National in March by the IRA, the All England Club authorities were certainly taking no chances here.

To facilitate the bag and body search of every spectator, the die-hard queuers are being restricted to one entrance only this year. The move made the wait longer than in previous years, but with typical British stoicism, the Wimbledon worshippers bore the delay and in-

convenience with remarkable good humour.

A medal ought to be struck for four intrepid souls from Southend, who took first place in the queue at 6pm on Saturday night. Knowing that a wait of 40 hours was in front of them and also knowing that the weather forecast predicted a somewhat less than comfortable stay for them on the Church Road tarmac.

It is a yearly ritual for these young men from Southend, who have become familiar faces to the Wimbledon groundstaff. Needless to say, they were first in when the gates swung open at 10.30 yesterday morning, but nobody dared risk an ironic observation on Britain's glorious summer in their hearing.

DEEDS OF THE SEEDS															
Men's singles								Women's singles							
Holder: Richard Krajicek (The Netherlands)								Holder: Steffi Graf (Germany)							
1. S. AGGAS	2. A. PASARELLI	3. M. SANCHEZ	4. J. BLAKE	5. J. BLAKE	6. J. BLAKE	7. J. BLAKE	8. J. BLAKE	1. S. AGGAS	2. A. PASARELLI	3. M. SANCHEZ	4. J. BLAKE	5. J. BLAKE	6. J. BLAKE	7. J. BLAKE	8. J. BLAKE
9. J. BLAKE	10. J. BLAKE	11. J. BLAKE	12. J. BLAKE	13. J. BLAKE	14. J. BLAKE	15. J. BLAKE	16. J. BLAKE	9. J. BLAKE	10. J. BLAKE	11. J. BLAKE	12. J. BLAKE	13. J. BLAKE	14. J. BLAKE	15. J. BLAKE	16. J. BLAKE
17. J. BLAKE	18. J. BLAKE	19. J. BLAKE	20. J. BLAKE	21. J. BLAKE	22. J. BLAKE	23. J. BLAKE	24. J. BLAKE	17. J. BLAKE	18. J. BLAKE	19. J. BLAKE	20. J. BLAKE	21. J. BLAKE	22. J. BLAKE	23. J. BLAKE	24. J. BLAKE
25. J. BLAKE	26. J. BLAKE	27. J. BLAKE	28. J. BLAKE	29. J. BLAKE	30. J. BLAKE	31. J. BLAKE	32. J. BLAKE	25. J. BLAKE	26. J. BLAKE	27. J. BLAKE	28. J. BLAKE	29. J. BLAKE	30. J. BLAKE	31. J. BLAKE	32. J. BLAKE

THE NUMBERS GAME
182 The number of ball girls and boys who work at the Championships.
30,000 The portions of fish and chips are consumed by visiting tennis fans.
58 The number of different nations competing in this year's Championships.
TODAY'S WEATHER
Generally dry, sunny spells, cloudy later. Maximum temperature 19C (66F).

Game set and watch.
ROLEX
OFFICIAL TIMEKEEPER TO THE CHAMPIONSHIPS, WIMBLEDON.

Majoli savours the green grass of victory

GUY HODGSON

You would have thought Iva Majoli had just won the French Open again. Indeed, she admitted it was almost as good. Her smile lit up the grey skies when she defeated Argentina's Maria Diaz-Oliva yesterday and she bowed with utter delight to the Court Two crowd.

When she took her first Grand Slam title in Paris two weeks ago, she said her dream was to win a match at Wimbledon, where she had a 100 per cent record of failure. Yesterday, that

dream came true: 2-6, 6-0, 6-3. "It was a release," the fourth seed said.

"People have said I should do well on grass but it's tough to play when you come to the court and you think: 'Oh my gosh, I've never won a match'. I'll have more confidence now. I feel good about myself."

It is doubtful if Majoli felt that way when she surrendered the first set in 24 minutes, but she remembered the advice she had got from the former champions, Martina Navratilova and Billie Jean King, beforehand, and turned the match around. "They told me if I bent my knees, be down low and move well, I'd have a chance. They were really happy for me."

Majoli was happy too, so much so that even Eastbourne, which put her on an outside court last week when she felt, as the French champion, she deserved better, got off relatively lightly. "That's past and I don't really feel like talking about it," she said. "That's a tournament I'll probably never play in again in my life. I thought it was unfair but it was their decision. Now I'm fine and I'm at Wimbledon."

So was Dinu Pescariu, but he was less than thrilled. For most of us, the thunder rumbled at Wimbledon 1997 just as the clock hit 1pm, but he was the exception. For him the storm began as soon as the first ball was struck. To get Goran Ivanisevic, the second

seed, in the first round is bad enough when you are a seasoned player on grass. The Romanian was making his debut on the lawns of the All England club and was not enjoying the experience. With the ball crashing past his ears, you could not blame him.

Someone recently ranked Mark Philippoussis as the fastest server in the world, but Pescariu might beg to differ. Ivanisevic's first has the velocity of a missile, his next – you could not demean it by describing it as a second serve – is merely impressively swift. Two carries the nickname "the Graveyard of champions": on this occasion it was the challenger who was mentally carried off on the stretcher.

The first set was a 21-minute rout that Ivanisevic, like Majoli a Croat, dominated so completely that he attempted a volley from between his legs by way of light relief. The second was closer in terms of score, but quicker at 19 minutes. By the end, the scoreline of 6-1, 6-3, 6-3, was flattering, if anything, to Pescariu.

Ivanisevic served 24 aces, a remarkable number in just 11 service games – two of which were won with four great backsmash heaves of his formidable left arm. He has served more before, but never at such a rate. Pescariu, understandably, looked thoroughly miserable and almost shell-shocked.

Now Edberg has time to visit Harrods

One familiar face who will be missing from Wimbledon this year, and not because of injury, is Stefan Edberg.

Edberg was still only 30 when he bowed out of big-time tennis following the Davis Cup final against France, which ended on 1 December last year.

The Swede, who has made his home in London, won Wimbledon in 1988 and 1990, was the world No 1 for 72 weeks in the early 1990s and played in a record 54 successive Grand Slam tournaments, ending his great run at the 1996 US Open, where one of his victims was Tim Henman.

Edberg's behaviour on court was impeccable in an age of rising tempers, but his modesty was even more pronounced. When he won Wimbledon for the first time, he was worried he would no longer be able to shop in Harrods because he may have been recognised.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Men's singles		Women's singles first round	
Holder R Krajicek (Neth)	6-1 6-3 6-3	Holder S Graf (Ger)	6-1 6-3 6-3
I IVANISEVIC (Croat) bt D Pescariu (Rom)	6-1 6-3 6-3	I SPIRLEA (Rom) bt H Nagayeva (Slovak)	6-1 6-3 6-3
A Pavol (Rom) bt F Dewulf (Bel)	6-1 4-6 2-6 6-3	M Maleeva (Bul) bt J Pulin (GB)	6-1 6-3 6-3
C MOYA (Sp) bt S Bryen (US)	7-6 6-3 4-6 6-2	G Leon Garcia (Sp) bt M Endo (Japan)	6-3 6-3
A Richardson (GB) bt S Duran (Sp)	7-6 6-3 6-3	C Tarnes-Vallero (Sp) bt G Pizzichini (It)	6-1 6-3 6-3
B Steven (NZ) bt L Roux (Fr)	6-2 6-2 7-6	D Chladkova (Cz Rep) bt S Klenkova (Cz Rep)	7-6 6-4
T HENMAN (GB) bt D Nestor (Can)	7-6 6-1 6-4	L DAVENPORT (US) bt T Jones (US)	5-7 6-2 6-2
R KRAJICEK (Neth) bt M Craca (Ger)	7-6 6-2 6-4	I MAJOLI (Croat) bt M Diaz Oliva (Arg)	2-6 6-0 6-3
J Viloca (Sp) bt M-K Goellner (Ger)	7-5 4-6 7-6 7-6	R Koenig (SA) and A Rueb (US) bt D Norman (Bel) and K Thorne (US)	6-1 4-6 6-3
J Frana (Arg) bt M Damm (Cz Rep)	6-7 6-4 6-3 6-2	B Elwood and P Tramacchi (Aus) bt B Behrens (US) and C Haggard (SA)	6-7 6-4 7-5
		D Dilucia (US) and R Smith (Bah) bt R Lavergne and S Simian (Fr)	6-7 7-5 6-6

Quotes of the day

"This is a dream come true, getting through the first round of Wimbledon. After winning this match, I was almost as happy as when I won the French Open."

Iva Majoli after her 2-6, 6-0, 6-3 victory over Argentina's Mariana Diaz Oliva.

"I have much more confidence playing on grass and just feel much better on this surface. Last year, before going to Wimbledon, I just didn't feel good on grass and this year I feel very happy, very loose and really enjoying playing on grass."

Richard Krajicek, who made a winning start to his defence of the Wimbledon title by beating Germany's Marcello Craca 7-6, 6-2, 6-4.

"This is the 12th year I've lined up here. Usually I'd only come on the Saturday but I wanted to make sure I could get tickets for Court One – you could call me a tennis addict."

Frances Burgess, aged 37, from Oxford, who pitched her igloo tent on the footpath at the main entrance to Wimbledon at 8pm on Friday to ensure she could get a seat for the opening of Court One.

Feaver's record safe for a while

John Feaver, the former British Davis Cup player and now a Lawn Tennis Association tournament director, can stop chewing his nails for the next couple of days at least.

Back in 1976, Feaver, using an old fashioned wooden racket, created a Wimbledon record when he served 42 aces in his second-round match against the former three-time champion, John Newcombe, a match he nevertheless lost.

Feaver, understandably, is quite proud of his record, but in recent years has always thought that one day Goran Ivanisevic, the King of the Aces, would surpass it.

But in his first-round match against the Romanian, Dinu Pescariu, Ivanisevic served only 24 en route to a 6-1, 6-3, 6-3 win, although he only served for 12 games, working out at two aces per game.

TOMORROW'S HEADLINE?

Sampras slumps to Swede

You have to go back 30 years to the last time a No 1 seed was beaten in the first round at Wimbledon, Manuel Santana losing to Charlie Pasarell. But for this year's No 1, today's meeting with Mikael Tillstrom is awkward. Sampras's last two defeats have both been at the hands of Swedes (at the French Open and at Queen's) and he is out of sorts. Tillstrom's form has declined after a strong start to the year and he has lost both his previous meetings with Sampras. But he is used to ignoring the script at Wimbledon, having beaten the about to retire Stefan Edberg last year, and Sampras has been vulnerable early in Grand Slams before. It could be close.

Simon O'Hagan

Forcer
display
Richard
off ma

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Forceful display has Richardson off mark

Guy Hodgson on a superb start for the British No 5 but disappointment for the first home player to lose yesterday

When Andrew Richardson used to play in London, he usually ended up on the floor of Tim Henman's flat. The Hilton it is not, but if he is looking for a precedent for success at Wimbledon, there is one. John McEnroe, tantrums apart, may have been nearly flawless as a tennis player, but it does not mean he was not floored.

McEnroe shared a room with fellow American Eliot Teltscher when he arrived to qualify for Wimbledon in 1977, a room that had only one bed in it. Someone had to sleep on the carpet and they took it in turns until the future three-times champion made it to the semi-finals. By then, he was earning enough to afford a room of his own.

Richardson, the 23-year-old British No 5, would not put himself anywhere near McEnroe's class, but he won his first match at Wimbledon yesterday to join Henman, a friend since he was 10, in the second round. A swift victory it was, too, beating Spain's Sergi Bruguera 7-6, 6-3, 6-3.

"I didn't think I returned that well at the beginning," he said, "but I took my chances in the second and third sets. I served very well. It makes life so much easier."

At 6ft 7in, it does not take a genius to work out that the serve is Richardson's principal weapon. He is ranked 233 in the world, but on grass that is a false position, particularly when you begin a point well in excess of 110mph. Bruguera had hardly a hope of returning consistently, gained only four points on his opponent's serve until the tie-break, and once that had been lost, he dissolved.

"If I play well then I've always got a chance against most players," Richardson said. "I've nothing to lose, just go for it. Wimbledon has the sort of atmosphere where I play my best tennis. I can go out there and relax. Give it a go."

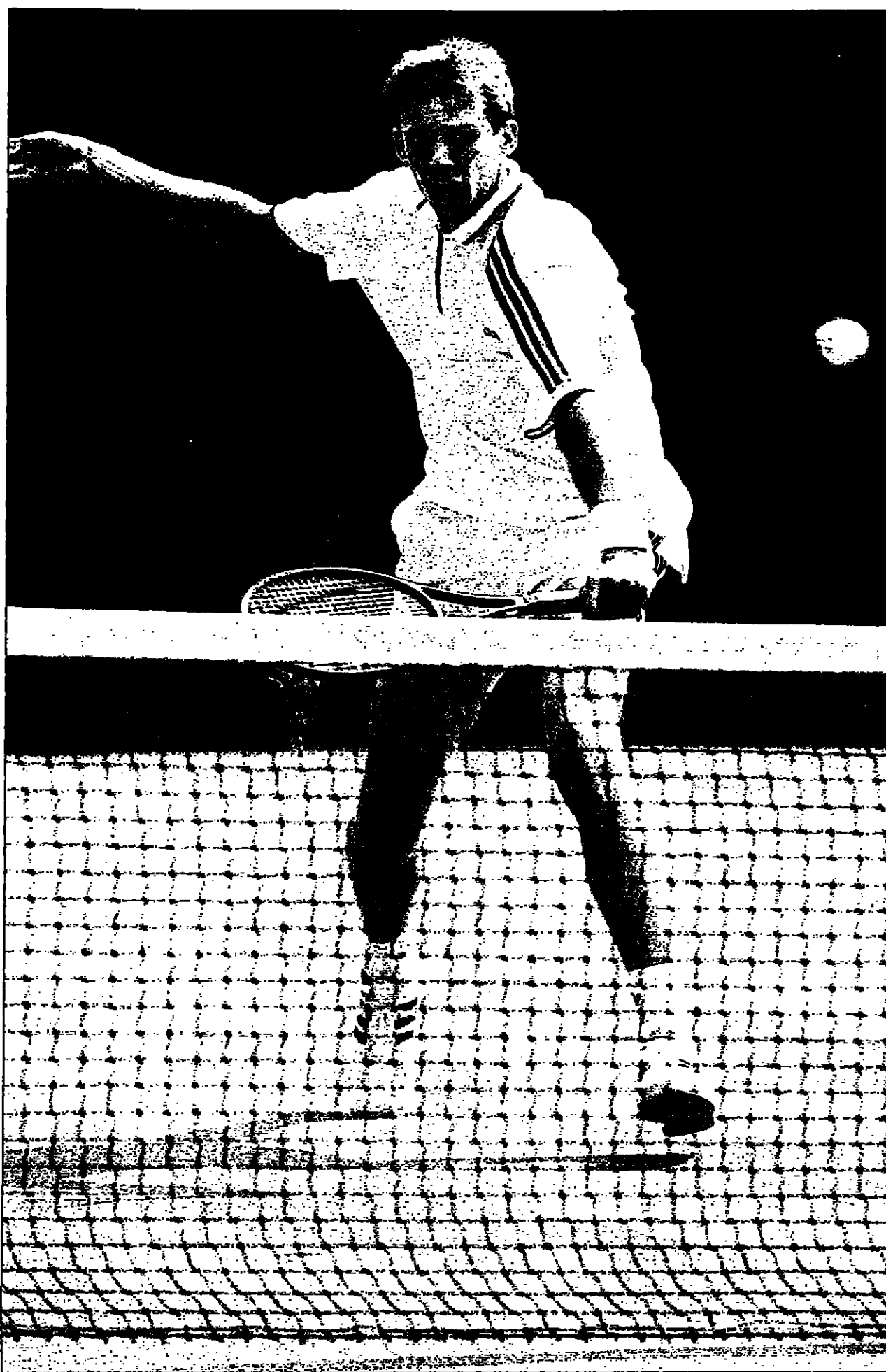
"The only target I've set myself is to play well. If I do that, win or lose, I'll be happy." As for Henman, he has been both housed and roused by him. "He used to let me stay at his flat, on his floor," he said. "It was kind of him. I had nowhere to stay. Did you do the cleaning to pay the rent?" "Yes, right."

"I've grown up with Tim and his doing so well has inspired me. There are a few British guys coming through and I think that has something to do with his and Greg Rusedski's success."

While Richardson was sampling success at the All England Club for the first time, Julie Pullin was learning tennis can be cruel. You wait all year to get a chance to play at Wimbledon and, barely before the championships have started, you are already packing your bags.

Pullin was the first home player to taste defeat, losing 6-1, 6-3 in 63 minutes to Magdalena Maleeva. "I'm so very disappointed," she said. "I didn't bring my game on to the court, I didn't test her. We have to play our top game to get into a dog-fight, but I didn't give myself a chance."

The 21-year-old from Leicester was broken to love in her first service game and would have succumbed even more quickly if she had not withstood six break points on the fourth game and then broke Maleeva with defeat staring her in the face it was intimidating.



Andrew Richardson plays a volley during his first-round success at Wimbledon

Photograph: David Ashdown

Crooks has to retire at 33

Rugby League
DAVE HADFIELD

One of the great playing careers of modern times has ended with Lee Crooks' announcement that he is retiring because of chronic knee problems.

Crooks, who will be 34 in September, will now concentrate on learning his trade as a coach at his club, Castleford, with a view to finding a first team job in the future.

The decision was frustrating, considering the passion I still feel for the sport I have been involved in for so long," he said. "However, with the possibility of a permanent disability lingering in the near future, it was one I had to make."

Crooks' career began in 1980, with his home-town club, Hull, and he gained the first of his 19 Great Britain caps against the touring Australians in 1982.

The best young forward of his time, he has admitted to losing his way in mid-career, especially during an unhappy spell with Leeds, but he has matured into something of an elder statesman at Castleford.

His hall skills remain among the best in the game, but knee problems have plagued him over the last 18 months. An operation to remove a piece of floating bone six weeks ago was only a limited success and Crooks struggled through his last match, against Hunter Mariners, 10 days ago.

Crooks' career turns out to have ended with the World Club Championship, which goes into cold storage until mid-July following the last

games on both sides of the globe yesterday. London Broncos became the latest side to come away empty-handed in Australia when they were beaten 34-18 at Canterbury, but they at least had the consolation of making a contest of it.

Unlucky to be 20-4 down after a scrappy first half, Broncos fought back with tries from Martin Offiah and Scott Roskell to trail by only eight points, but the Australians pulled away to win by a flattering margin.

"I think we showed that we've got a bit of pride in ourselves, compared to a lot of British sides," said Shaun Edwards, whose try near the end came too late to bring London back into contention. "It's going to be tough, but I believe we can put up a good show against the Australian sides on our own soil."

There were words of encouragement, too, from the Super League international board chairman, Maurice Lindsay. "Once the supporters in this country get over the disappointment following their own clubs' performances, they will see a fresh determination from everyone to match the Australian standards," he said.

"I also believe that some of our clubs will be determined to improve their performances during the second round of matches and I have not given up hope of a European club reaching the final stages."

No new date has yet been set for a Rugby League Council meeting cancelled tomorrow, which was meant to discuss far-reaching plans for the re-organisation of the game.

Italian stripped of gold after protest

Boxing

Controversy hit the Mediterranean Games in Rome yesterday when an Italian heavyweight was stripped of a gold medal in favour of an Algerian after a committee ruled that the electronic scoring of the fight was faulty. It was believed to be the first time that the hi-tech computerised scoring method used at Olympics and World Championships had been overruled.

The ruling came despite an earlier insistence by the governing body of world amateur boxing, AIBA, that the verdict had been correct.

The Italian Giacobbe Frangomeni won the heavyweight gold on Thursday when he outpointed Algeria's Mohammed Benguesmia, the team flag bearer, 3-2 on points. The result took the crowd by surprise and Algeria made a formal complaint when it emerged that four of the five judges had Benguesmia ahead on their back-up scorecards. The fifth judge scored it an 8-8 draw.

The International Committee of the Mediterranean Games declared after a hearing that Algeria's protest was upheld and Benguesmia should be awarded the gold due to a "flagrant malfunction of the computerised result". Frangomeni was given the silver medal.

The AIBA's Bulgarian president, Emil Jetchev, had been quoted earlier as saying that "the only valid verdict is the one put forward by the Italian".

The AIBA was not immediately available for comment after the decision on the protest. Raffaele Pagnozzi, the secretary general of the Italian Olympic Committee, CONT, had said on Saturday that his country, which has dominated the Games, was willing to give the gold to Algeria. "We are willing to hand back this gold medal," said "We don't know what happened. Maybe the machines were wrongly set up or did not work properly."

Pagnozzi stuck to his position on Sunday, despite angry accusations by Patrizio Oliva, the former Olympic gold medalist and Italian boxing team coach, that CONT's attitude had more to do with votes for Rome's 2004 Olympic bid. Rome is one of five cities on the shortlist for the Games and a front-runner to win when the International Olympic Committee decides in September. The former head of the Italian football federation, Antonio Matarrese, who is the chairman of the local Mediterranean Games organising committee, hinted as much on Sunday when he was quoted as saying: "There are superior interests involved."

Frangomeni said he would rather have had a re-match against the Algerian than "the robbed of the gold in such a way".

SPORTING DIGEST

Athletics

The International Amateur Athletics Federation meeting in Sestriere on 19 July could be cancelled if sponsors do not come forward to finance part of the 1bn lire (£360,000) cost.

American football

WORLD BOWL: Barcelona Dragons 38 Rhein Fire 24.

Baseball

MAJOR LEAGUES: American League: Cleveland 5 New York Yankees 2; Detroit 3 Boston 2; Toronto 2 Baltimore 5; Chicago White Sox 1; Minnesota 1; Milwaukee 5 Kansas City 5; Anaheim 7 Oakland 6; Texas 4 Seattle 5. National League: Montreal 0 Florida 2; Philadelphia 5 Atlanta 12; New York Mets 12 Pittsburgh 9 (10 innings); St Louis 5 Cincinnati 2; Houston 3 Chicago Cubs 1; San Francisco 4 Colorado 2; San Diego 4 Los Angeles 2.

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division	W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	48	22	.688	0
NY Yankees	40	32	.556	9
Toronto	33	36	.478	14 1/2
Detroit	32	38	.457	16
Boston	32	40	.444	17
Central Division	W	L	PCT	GB
Cleveland	37	32	.539	0
Minnesota	34	35	.493	3
Kansas City	34	35	.493	3
Chicago W Sox	34	37	.479	4
Minnesota	33	39	.458	5 1/2
West Division	W	L	PCT	GB
Seattle	42	31	.575	0
Anaheim	38	34	.528	3 1/2
Texas	36	35	.507	5
Oakland	30	40	.430	13
NATIONAL LEAGUE	W	L	PCT	GB
East Division	W	L	PCT	GB
Atlanta	47	26	.644	0
Florida	39	29	.571	3 1/2
Montreal	41	31	.569	3 1/2
New York Mets	41	32	.562	6
Philadelphia	22	49	.310	24
Central Division	W	L	PCT	GB
St Louis	37	37	.500	0
Pittsburgh	30	40	.430	7 1/2
Chicago Cubs	28	45	.384	9 1/2

West Division

San Francisco 42 31 .575 0
Colorado 36 37 .493 3
Los Angeles 31 42 .425 13

Bowls

Margaret Johnston became the first player to win the British women's singles championship for a third time in her yesterday, beating Ann Dainton 25-11.

CRICKET

WCO TROPHY Semi-final draw: Shrotonhead v Devon (at St George's, Telford); Dorset v Northants (at Dean Park, Bournemouth). Test to be played Sunday 29 July.

Football

The former Italian international captain Franco Baresi announced his retirement from professional football yesterday after 20 consecutive seasons with Milan. Baresi, 37, said he would stay at the club as a vice-president and would also work with the youth team.

WORLD CUP Asian Zone Group Seven (Beijing): Lebanon 1 (A-Farhat 22) Kuwait 3 (Ousaili 9, Al-Saleh 31, 74) (Roundoff quality for second round).

COPA AMERICA Quarter-finals (Santa Cruz, Bolivia): Brazil 2 (Ronaldo 17, 34) Paraguay 0; Czech Republic 3 (Blahosky 7, 37, 40) Ecuador 1 (Carrasco 5) (Match won 4-3 on penalties). Semi-finals: 25 June (at La Paz): Bolivia v Mexico, 26 June (Santa Cruz): Brazil v Peru.

WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP (Malaysia): Group D: Japan 3 Paraguay 3; Spain 4 Costa Rica 0; Group E: Austria 4 Argentina 3; Canada 2 Hungary 1; Group F: England 1 (Caven 68) Mexico 0; United Arab Emirates 2 Ivory Coast 0 (England won group).

INTERCITY CUP Group C: Dundee 93 Minsk (Bel) 1; Haverham (Went) 0; Alton 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group D: Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group E: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group F: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group G: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group H: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group I: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group J: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group K: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group L: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group M: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group N: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group O: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group P: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group Q: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group R: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group S: Dundee 0; Haverham 1; Dundee 0; Palsi Varnen 0; Group T: Dundee 0; 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New Dell boy
Jones takes over at
Southampton, page 28

sport

Lions' pride
Chris Hewett on the fight for
second Test places, page 29



WIMBLEDON '97: British seed makes light of rain interruption to mark opening of new No 1 court with victory

Henman rises to special occasion

JOHN ROBERTS
reports from Wimbledon



The tall left-hander in the bandana did not serve with anything like the velocity of Greg Rusedski, but he had arrived from Canada and was threatening Tim Henman's space.

The British No 1 had not encountered Daniel Nestor before, and the 24-year-old from Ontario, ranked No 105 in the world, was keen to seize a slice of history as the first winner on the new No 1 Court.

Henman, the first Briton to be seeded for the men's singles since Buster Mottram in 1982, had to contend with the emotion of the occasion, the expectation of the nation, and the shots of an eager opponent. He

YESTERDAY AT WIMBLEDON

Convincing victory for Henman as new No 1 court opens

Richardson reaches second round with swift victory over Spaniard

Krajicek serves 19 aces in successful start to his title defence

dealt with the situation, winning 7-6, 6-1, 6-4.

A year earlier, you may recall, Henman had stepped out on the Centre Court against a newly crowned French Open champion, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, and had taken a two sets to love lead, only to be hauled back and almost passed. The Russian

had two match points at 5-3 in the fifth set. Henman saved them with aces and went on to win, 7-6, 6-3, 6-7, 4-6, 7-5.

On that occasion, Henman was cast in the role of a British hopeful doing himself and the home supporters proud. Yesterday, he was being relied upon to set a tone of optimism

following a parade of international champions at the opening ceremony.

The early signs suggested that Henman still remained jammed in the stop-go mode that had marked his recent performances. He began brightly enough, passing Nestor down the line with a backhand to break for 2-1. But no sooner had the spectators settled back, happy at the prospect of enjoying a home success than Henman's serve let him down and Nestor levelled at 2-2.

Although both players were taken to duce, serve prevailed until the tie-break brought the match to life. Henman gained the initiative at 5-4, with two serves to come, only to be passed on the backhand before delivering a service winner to create the first set point, but with his opponent to serve.

Nestor held, then hit a winning serve for his first set point. Henman aces it away. The pattern of chances materialising and evaporating continued until the Briton saved a third set point with his eighth ace and put Nestor under pressure for a fourth time with a service winner.

On this occasion, Henman was primed to attack after Nestor hit a first serve long, returning the second serve down the line with a forehand that clipped the net cord on the way to deciding the shoot-out, 13-11.

Henman, a set to the good after 49 minutes, had taken a 2-0 lead in the second set before Nestor rid himself of the disappointment of losing the tie-break. Henman was then rather fortunate to hold for 3-0, having to save two break points after leading 40-0. Once Henman had broken for 5-1 and finished the set with a pair of aces, however, only the rain threatened to delay his advance to the second round.

The clouds broke during the second game of the third set, with Nestor leading 1-0 and Henman serving at 15-0. The players were off the court for an hour and 15 minutes, Henman returning in determined mood. He held, broke for 2-1 and was pleased to successfully have completed phase one of his latest campaign.

Asked what it had been like playing the first match in the new arena, Henman said, "It was obviously a great honour, but it did feel very much like Centre Court, actually. The court was very hard. I thought it was going to be a little bit softer, but it played just like every other court, with no bad bounces."

"I think you can notice that it is fractionally smaller [than Centre Court], but there's still a great atmosphere out there. There was a lot of support for me. Being British, and having had a good run last year, makes it all the more exciting to come back. I think I responded, and I think the crowd responded."

They did, although at times there was a good deal of shuffling in those brand new seats. "I think I've learnt from the way that I've been playing recently," Henman said. "I think in those times when I was behind in the tie-break today, I paid a little added attention to each serve. I think there was a period when I was making a lot of big first serves to get myself out of trouble."

"I thought to myself, 'Let's try to make life easier in the next couple of sets. I've given myself an opportunity. Let's go up a few gears.' And I think I definitely did that."

"I still have a lot of confidence in my own ability. During those periods when I've



Richard Krajicek, who won the first 19 points on his own serve, on his way to victory over Marcello Craca, of Germany, in the first match on Centre Court yesterday

struggled a little bit, I've always maintained my belief, faced up to things and continued to work hard, and definitely my form has improved."

Over on the Centre Court, meanwhile, Richard Krajicek was also being viewed in a different context after his exploits last year. The Dutchman was in the throes of opening the defence his title.

Krajicek was expected to overpower Marcello Craca, a 22-year-old from Germany,

ranked No 134. Krajicek, in common with Henman, fought his way through a tie-break and then asserted himself to win, 7-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Did he see any comparison between a glorious final Sunday and a wet first-round Monday? "Both days had a special tension," Krajicek said, "and both days I was pretty happy that I finally won."

Having shaken the seeding committee 12 months ago, was it possible that he might now

make some London bookies pay for offering him as 7-1 chance?

"Yes I feel pretty good," Krajicek said. "I think I have a good chance. I feel confident. After last year I know I can win a Grand Slam, and for sure I know I can win it on grass. Economically speaking, I think it was smarter to do it last year, when I was 50-1, but 7-1..."

More Wimbledon reports, pages 30 and 31
Results and Order of play, page 30

Butcher wins the mind game

David Llewellyn on how England's cricketers overcame the odds at Lord's

A relieved Michael Atherton last night admitted his England side got themselves out of an awkward situation, having been outplayed by Australia between the storms in the second Cornhill Test at Lord's. In the end, they cruised to a comfortable 266 for 4 when Atherton declared the second innings, leaving Australia to score an impossible 131 off the remaining eight overs to level the Ashes series.

It was academic - and Atherton was able to draw some positive things from what little had taken place. "We batted well today," he said, "and got ourselves out of a potentially dodgy situation. Australia played better than we did, but for us to have batted through a day with the ease that we did today was good for our confidence. When I took over as captain, we were making a habit of defeat, now at least we are better at not losing."

Atherton also paid tribute to the way the tourists have come back from the first-Test defeat at Edgbaston. "I think they have pulled themselves up a lot since the first Test. They have a pretty aggressive approach to Test cricket."

Mark Taylor, the Australian captain, was also pleased. "We have bounced back and bounced back well in this game. We are capable of winning three out of the last four Tests. And all we need to do to retain the Ashes is to win one of them."

Yesterday, Atherton and Mark Butcher set the standard for the rest to follow. Atherton, who has yet to score a first-class hundred at Lord's, let alone one in a Test match, fell a frustrating 23 runs short. He admitted: "I don't think I have ever trodden on my wicket before. I knew exactly what had happened."

But Atherton was pleased for his opening partner and said: "It was a test of character for Butch. He is a good player, but he needed that. The longer he was out there, the more fluent he became."

Butcher himself said: "Battling with Atherton helped me. He's a good partner to have at the other end, he's seen it all before and he has played before in those situations. I knew this was make or break time. I hadn't really shown the way that I can play. So there was a bit of pressure on me this morning."

"With what has been happening to me this season, I had to play myself into form. That was effectively the hardest net I've ever had. But I am thrilled to bits."

"I felt really down on Saturday and had to make a conscious effort to lift myself. If there is one thing I hate more than anything in the world, it is dropping catches. I can get out for nought and it doesn't bother me as much as dropping catches. It was hard at the time, but the guys were really good to me and told me not to worry, it happens. They talked me through it and helped me out."

Derek Pringle, Henry Blofeld, Scoreboard, page 28

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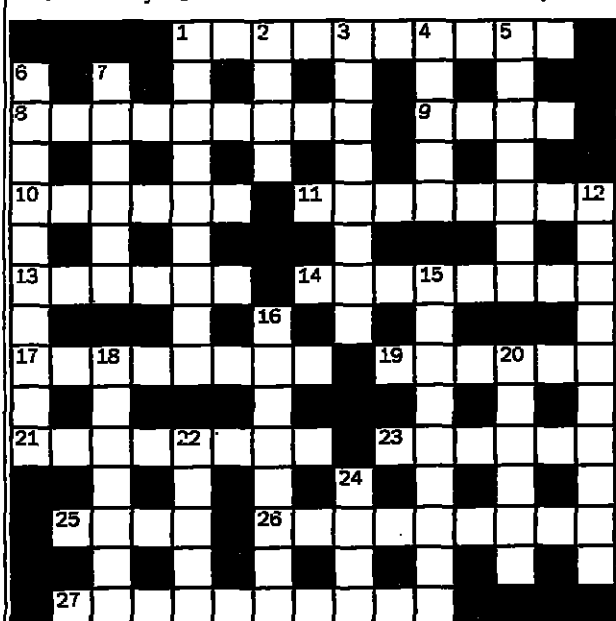
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THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3333, Tuesday 24 June

By Aetred

Monday's Solution



DEMURE SHORTAGE
E A O W O I P M
C A R D S H A P P D U P L E
I O C T S G O R
P R O M O T E K E E P I N G
H N M R D N E
E P S O M O P O S I T E
R O F A S U
P L A N K T O N I N F E R
E U O D E F A
R E G U L I N E J U T L A N D
A K D K U M B E R V I
C I N N A M O N
S A W B O N E S E S P R I T

ACROSS

- 1 Rough set includes fish workers scaling this with difficulty (10)
- 8 Old British menial is attentive to religious duties (9)
- 9 Some words shortly depicting soldier (4)
- 10 One component of mental faculties? (6)
- 11 A deal of the country? (8)
- 13 Want to get race in the bag (6)
- 14 Passé types like to live surrounded by females (8)
- 17 At last woman's made aunt liberal (8)
- 19 Publicity on percentage charged produces movement (6)

DOWN

- 21 Kept sounding off, embarrassed about city garden (2-6)
- 23 Take away weapon and upset said marine (6)
- 25 See the sights of singular French city? (4)
- 26 Left a group of players one day (9)
- 27 Perhaps loving word's nothing in a sister? (6,4)

Monday's Solution

- 5 Tell story of new errata seen to be wrong (7)
- 6 Mark's name given to expensive sounding take over (10)
- 7 Wit of English over outings (6)
- 12 Inconvenience sailor from hell, losing gold? (10)
- 15 Live free by day in lair, unable to get up (9)
- 16 Low dancing provides popular entertainment in US (8)
- 18 A terrible sight I saw broadcast (7)
- 20 Lacking definition in picture of cereal? (6)
- 22 Hospital robe depicted Biblical mountain (5)
- 24 Heard to give the word to start pudding (4)

FIND OUT WHO'S WINNING



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